

SCRIPTURE PROOF  
OF THE  
UNLAWFULNESS OF  
Religious Worshipping any other Being  
Beside the One  
Supream God.

*By Wm. Sherlock D.D.*

PART I

LONDON:

Printed for Abel Smalls, at the *Unions*, at  
the West-end of St. Pauls Church-yard.  
MDCLXXXVI.

DISCOURSE

Containing the Church

Religious Worship

SCRIPTURE-PROOF

OF THE

UNLAWFULNESS OF GIVING ANY  
Religious Worship to any other Being

But to the One

Supreme God.

PART I.

LONDON

Printed for W. & A. Gorton, at the Church-yard,  
the West-end of St. Paul's Church-yard.

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# DISCOURSE

## Concerning the Object of RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

### THE INTRODUCTION.

**O**F all the Disputes between us and the Church of Rome, there is none of greater concernment, than that about the Object of Religious Worship.

We affirm, as the Scripture has taught us, that we must Mat. 10.  
Worship the Lord our God and serve him only; the Church of Rome teaches, that there is a degree of Religious Worship, which we may give to some excellent Creatures, to Angels, and Saints, and Images, and the Host, and to the Reliques of Saints and Martyrs. If they are in the right, we may be thought very rude and uncivil at least, in denying to pay that Worship which is due to such excellent Creatures, and very injurious to our selves in it, by losing the benefit of their Prayers and Patronage. If we be in the right, the Church of Rome is guilty of giving that Worship to Creatures which is due to God alone, which is acknowledged on all hands to be the greatest of sins; and therefore this is a dispute which can never be compromised, though we were never so desirous of an Union and Reconciliation with the Church of Rome; for the Incommunicable Glory of God and the Salvation of our Souls, are too dear things to be given away in complement to any Church.

And should it appear in the next World (for I believe it will never appear to be so in this) that we were mistaken, that we were over-nice and curious in refusing to Worship Saints and Angels, yet ours is a much more innocent and pardonable mistake, than that which the Church of Rome is guilty of, if

they should prove to be mistaken. We are truly sensible of some Religious Courtship, which we might innocently have given to Saints and Angels, but which we were not bound to give, (as the Church of Rome will not say, that we are) by any express Divine Law; and therefore it is no sin against God not to do it; and when this neglect is not owing to any designed contempt and dis-regard of those excellent Spirits, but to a great reverence for God, and jealousy for his incommunicable glory, if it were a fault, we need not doubt but that God would pardon it, and that all good Spirits, who have such a profound veneration for God, will easily excuse the neglect of some Ceremonies to themselves upon so great a reason.

But if the Church of Rome be mistaken, and gives that Worship to Creatures, which is due only to the Supreme God, they have nothing to pretend in excuse of it; neither any positive Law of God, which expressly forbids all Creature-worship (as I doubt not to prove, to the satisfaction of all impartial Readers) nor the principles of Natural Reason; which, whatever Apologies it may make for the Worship of Saints and Angels, can never prove the necessity of it; and it highly concerns the Church of Rome, and all of her Communion to consider, whether if their distinctions and little appearances of reason cannot justify their Worship of Creatures, they will be able to excuse them from the guilt of so great a sin.

But not to insist on these things now; I shall divide this discourse into three parts.

1. I shall prove from the plain evidence of Scripture, That God alone is to be Worshipped.
2. I shall examine what that Worship is, which is proper and peculiar to the Supreme God.
3. I shall consider those distinctions, whereby the Church of Rome justifies her Worship of Saints and Angels, and Images, &c.

SECT.

## SECTION I.

*That GOD alone must be Worshipped.*

**T**O make good the first point, that we must worship no other Being, but only God, I shall principally confine my self to Scripture evidence, which is the most certain authority to determine this matter. For though I confess, it seems to me a self evident and fundamental principle in natural Religion, that we must worship none but that Supreme Being, who made, and who governs the world, yet I find men reason very differently about these matters. Sect. 1.

The Heathen Philosophers, who generally acknowledged one Supreme and Sovereign Deity, did not think it incongruous, nor any affront or diminution to the Supreme God, to ascribe an inferior kind of Divinity, nor to pay an inferiour degree of Religious Worship to those excellent Spirits, which are so much above us, and have so great a share in the government of this lower world, no more than it is an affront to a Sovereign Monarch, to honour and reverence his great Ministers of State, or peculiar Favourites. And the Church of *Rome*, as she has corrupted Christianity with the worship of Angels and Saints departed, so she defends her self with the same Arguments and Reasons, which were long since alleadged by *Celsus* and *Porphyrie*, and other Heathen Philosophers, in defence of their Pagan Idolatry.

And it must be confessed, that these Arguments are very popular, and have something so agreeable in them, to the natural notions of Civil Honour and respect, which admits of great variety of degrees, that I do not wonder

der that such vast numbers of men , both wise and unwise , have been imposed on by them.

For there is certainly proportionable reverence and respect due even to created excellencies , and every degree of power challenges and commands a just regard , and we are bound to be very thankful not only to God , who is the first cause , and the supream giver of all good things , but to our immediate Benefactors also. And therefore if there be a sort of middle Beings , as the Heathens believed , and as the Church of *Rome* asserts , between us and the Suprem God , who takes particular care of us , and either by there power and interest in the government of the world , or by their intercessions with the Supream God , can and do bestow a great many Blessings on us , it seems as natural and necessary to fear and reverence , to honour and worship them , and to give them thanks for their care and patronage of us , as it is to court a powerful Favourite , who by his interest and authority can obtain any request we make to our Prince ; and the first seems to be no greater injury to God , than the second is to a Prince. Thus *St. Paul* observes , that there is a shew of humility in worshipping Angels ; that men dare not immediately approach so glorious a Majesty as God is , but make those addresses by those excellent spirits which attend the Throne of God , and are the Ministers of his Providence.

2 Col. 18.

But then every one who believes that there is one Supreme God , who made all other Beings , though never so perfect and excellent , must acknowledge , that as there is nothing common to God and Creatures , so there must be a peculiar Worship due to God , which no Creatures can challenge any share in. It is no affront to a Prince to pay some inferiour degrees of civil honour and respect to his Ministers and Favourites , because as the difference between a Prince and his Subjects is not founded in nature , but in civil order ; so there are different degrees of  
civil

civil respect proportioned to the different ranks and degrees of men in the Common-wealth. There is a degree of prehemineny which is sacred and peculiar to the Person of the Prince, and no Prince will suffer his greatest Favourite to usurp the Prerogative honours which belong to the Crown; but while they are contented with such respects as are due to their rank and station, this is no injury to the Prince; for all civil honour is not peculiar to the Prince, but only supereminent degree of it, and therefore inferiour degrees of honour may be given to others persons.

But though there are different degrees of civil honour proper to different ranks and degrees of men, who all partake in the same nature, and are distinguishd only by their different places in the Common-wealth; yet in this sense there are no different degrees of Religious Worship. All Religious Worship is peculiar to the Divine Nature, which is but one, and common only to three Divine Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God blessed for ever, Amen. Civil honour and Religious Worship differ in the whole kind and species of actions, and have as different objects as God and Creatures; and we may as well argue from those different degrees of civil honour among men, to prove that there is an inferiour degree of civil honour due to Beasts, as that there is an inferiour degree of Religious Worship due to some men. For all degrees of Religious Worship are as peculiar and appropriate to God, as civil respects are to men, and as the highest degree of civil honour is to a Sovereign Prince.

However should we grant, that some excellent Creatures might be capable of some inferiour degrees of Religious Worship; yet as the Prince is the fountain of civil honour, which no Subject must presume to usurp, without a grant from his Prince, so no Creature, how excellent soever, has any natural and inherent right to



any degree of Religious Worship, and therefore we must not presume to worship any Creature without Gods command, nor to pay any other degree of Worship to them, but what God has prescribed and instituted; and the only way to know this, is to examine the Scriptures, which is the only external revelation we have of the will of God.

Let us then inquire, what the sense of Scripture is in this controversie; and I shall distinctly examine the testimonies both of the Old and New Testament, concerning the object of Religious Worship.

## S E C T. II.

### *The Testimonies of the Mosaical Law considered.*

*Sect. 2.* 1. **T**O begin with the Old Testament; and nothing is more plain in all the Scripture, than that the Laws of *Moses* confine Religious Worship to that one Supreme God, the Lord *Jehovah*, who Created the Heavens and the Earth. For,

1. The *Israelites* were expressly commanded to Worship the Lord *Jehovah*, and to Worship no other Being; as our Saviour himself assures us, who I suppose will be allowed for a very good Expositor of the Laws of *Moses*. *It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* In the *Hebrew Text*, from whence our Saviour cites this Law, it is only said, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve him*, without that addition, *of him only*. And yet both the *Septuagint* and the vulgar *Latine*, read the words as our Saviour doth, *him only shalt thou serve*; and the authority of our Saviour is sufficient to justify this Interpretation; and withal, gives us a general rule, which puts an end to this controversie; that as often as we are commanded in Scripture to worship

4 Matth. 10.

6 Deutr. 13.

10 Deutr. 20.



worship God, we are commanded also to worship none besides him.

For indeed the first Commandment is very express in this matter, and all other Laws which concern the object of *Worship*, must in all reason be expounded by that. *Thou shalt have none other Gods before me.* <sup>20 Exod. 3.</sup> The Septuagint renders it *καὶ ἐμοῖ* besides me; so does the *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, and *Arabick* to the same sense. And it is universally concluded by all Expositors that I have seen, that the true interpretation of this Commandment is, that we must Worship no other God, but the Lord *Jehovah*. To pay Religious Worship to any Being, does in the Scripture notion, make that Being our God, which is the only reason, why they are commanded not to have any other Gods. For there is but one true God, and therefore in a strict sense, they can have no other Gods, because there are no other Gods to be had; but whatever Beings they worship, they make that their God by worshipping it; and so the Heathens had a great many Gods, but the *Jews* are commanded to have but one God, that is, to worship none else besides him.

In other places God expressly forbids them to worship <sup>6 Deutr. 14.</sup> any *strange Gods*, or the Gods of the people, or those Nations that were round about them. And least we should suspect, that they were forbid to worship the Gods of the people, only because those Heathen Idolaters worshipped Devils and wicked Spirits, the Prophet *Jeremiah* gives us a general notion, who are to be reputed false Gods, and not to be worshipped. <sup>70 Jere. 11.</sup> Thus shall ye say unto them, the Gods that have not made the Heavens and the Earth, even they shall perish from the Earth; and from under these Heavens. So that whatever Being is worshipped, whether it be a good or a bad Spirit, which did not make the Heavens and the Earth, is a false God to such Worshipers: and I suppose the Church of *Rome* will not say, that Saints or Angels, or the Virgin *Mary* (as much

much as they magnifie her) made the Heavens and the Earth. And then according to this rule they ought not to be worshipt.

But to put this past doubt, that the true meaning of these Laws is to forbid the Worship of any other Being besides the Supreme God, I shall observe two or three things in our Saviours answer to the Devils temptation, which will give great light and strength to it.

1. That our Saviour absolutely rejects the Worship of any other Being together with the Supreme God. The thing our Saviour condemns, is not the renouncing the worship of God for the worship of Creatures, (for the Devil never tempted him to this) but the worship of any other Being besides God, though we still continue to worship the Supreme God. *It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Which is a plain demonstration, that men may believe and worship the Supreme God, and yet be Idolaters, if they worship any thing else besides him. The Devil did not desire our Saviour to renounce the worship of the Supreme God, but was contented that he should worship God still, so he would but worship him also. And therefore it is no reason to excuse the Church of Rome from Idolatry, because they worship the Supreme God, as well as Saints and Angels; this they may do, and be Idolaters still; for Idolatry does not consist meerly in renouncing the worship of the Supreme God, but in worshipping any thing else, though we continue to worship him. When the *Jews* worshipt their *Baalims* and false gods, they did not wholly renounce the worship of the God of *Israel*; and the Heathens themselves, especially the wisest men amongst them, did acknowledge one Supreme God, though they worshipt a great many inferior Deities with him.

2. Our Saviour in his answer to the Devils temptation, does not urge his being a wicked and Apostate Spirit,

an enemy and a rebel against God, but gives such a reason why he could not worship him, as equally excludes all Creatures, whether good or bad Spirits, from any right to Divine Worship. *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Him and none else, whether they be good or bad Spirits, for our Saviour does not confine his answer to either, and therefore includes them both.

When we charge the Church of *Rome* with too plain an imitation of the Pagan Idolatry in that worship they paid to their inferiour Dæmons, which was nothing more, than what the Church of *Rome* now gives to Saints and Angels; they think it a sufficient answer, that the Heathens worshipt Devils and Apostate Spirits, but they worship only the Friends and Favourites of God, blessed Saints and Angels.

Now I shall not at present examine the truth of this pretence, but shall refer my Reader to a more Learned Stillingsfleet's Defence of the discourse of Idolatry. person for satisfaction in this matter; but if it were true, yet it is nothing to the purpose, if our Saviours answer to the Devil be good.

For let us suppose, that the Pope of *Rome*, who calls himself Christs Vicar, had at this time been in Christs stead to have answered the Devils temptations, and let us be so charitable for once as to suppose that (saving always his indirect power over the Kingdoms of this world *in ordine ad spiritualia*) he would not worship the Devil to gain all the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them. Consider then how the Pope of *Rome* could answer this temptation; *All this I will give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me*: could he answer as our Saviour does? *It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* How easily might the Devil reply, Is this indeed your infallible Opinion, and the judgment and practice of your Church *to serve God onely*? do you not also serve and worship *St. Paul* and

and St. Peter, and the Virgin Mary, besides a great many other obscure and doubtful Saints? This is downright Heresie, to confine all Religious Worship to God; Here now is matter of fact against the Pope, that he does worship other Beings besides God, and if he will shew any reason for his not worshipping the Devil, he must quite alter our Saviours answer, and not plead for himself, that he is bound to worship God and him onely, but that he is bound to worship onely God and good Spirits; and therefore the Devil being a wicked and Apostate Spirit, it is not lawful to worship him. So that if our Saviour gave a sufficient answer to the Devils temptation, it must be equally unlawful to worship good and bad Spirits; there may be some peculiar aggravations in having communion with Devils, but the Idolatry of worshipping good and bad Spirits is the same.

3. Our Saviours answer to the Devil, appropriates all kinds and degrees of Religious Worship to God alone. The Devil was not then so good a School-man, as nicely to distinguish and dispute the degrees of Religious Worship with our Saviour, but would have been contented with any degree of Religious Worship. He did not pretend to be the Supreme God, nor to have the disposal of all the Kingdoms of the world in his own right: but acknowledges, that *it was delivered to him*, and now by vertue of that grant, *he gives it to whom he will*. Now it is impossible in the nature of the thing to worship any Being as Supreme, whom at the same time we acknowledge not to be Supreme. And therefore the Devil asks no more of our Saviour, than that *he would fall down and worship him*; which is such an inferior degree of Worship, as Papists every day pay to Images and Saints; and yet this our Saviour refuses to do, and that for this reason, that we must worship God only, which must signifie, that we must not give the least degree of Divine Worship to any Creatures; or else

esse it is not a satisfactory answer to the Devils Temptation, who did not require any certain and determinate degree of Worship, but left him at liberty to use what distinctions he pleased, and to pay what degree of Worship he saw fit; whether absolute or relative, supream or subordinate, terminative or transient, so he would but fall down and worship him any way, or in any degree, he left him to be his own Schoolman and Casuist; but of this more presently.

11. As the Laws of *Moses* in general, appropriate all Religious Worship to God, command us to worship God, and him only, so the whole Jewish Religion was fitted only for the worship of the Lord *Jehovah*.

I suppose our Adversaries will not deny, that the Tabernacle and Temple at *Jerusalem* was peculiarly consecrated to the honour and worship of the Lord *Jehovah*: this was the house where he dwelt, where he plac'd his Name, and the Symbols of his presence. It was a great profanation of that holy place, to have the worship of any strange Gods set up in it; and yet this was the only place of Worship appointed by the Law of *Moses*; they had but one Temple to worship in, and this one Temple consecrated to the peculiar worship of one God; which is a plain demonstration, that they were not allowed to worship any other God, because they had no place to worship him in.

And this I think is a plain proof, that all that worship which was confined to their Temple, or related to it, was peculiar to the Lord *Jehovah*, because that was his house, and then all the Jewish worship was so, which was either to be performed at the Temple, or had a relation and dependance on the Temple worship.

Sacrifice was the principal part of the Jewish worship, and this we know was confined to the Temple. *Moses* expressly commands *Israel*, *Take heed to thy self, that* <sup>12 Deut. 13,</sup> <sup>14</sup> *thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest.*



12 Deut. 13, *seest. But in the place which the Lord shall choose in one*  
 14 *of thy Tribes, there shalt thou offer thy burnt offerings, and*  
*there shalt thou do all that I command thee.* The Pro-  
 phets indeed, especially before the building of the Tem-  
 ple, did erect Alters at other places for occasional Sacri-  
 fices, for as God reserved a liberty to himself to dispense  
 with his own Law in extraordinary cases, so it was pre-  
 sumed, that what was done by the Prophets, was done by  
 a Divine command; but there was to be no ordinary or  
 standing Alter for Sacrifice, but at the Tabernacle or  
 Temple; this we may see in that dispute which had like  
 to have hapned between the Children of *Israel* and the  
 Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Ma-*  
 22 *nasseth*, about the Alter of Testimony, which these two  
*Joshua.* Tribes and a half built on the other side of *Jordan*. It  
 was agreed on all hands, that had it been intended for  
 an Alter for Sacrifice, it had been Rebellion against the  
 Lord to have built any Alter besides the Alter of the  
 16. 19. 22,  
 23. Lord, though they had offered no Sacrifice but to the  
 Lord *Jehovah*. The same is evident from Gods dislike  
 of their offering Sacrifices in their high places, though  
 they Sacrificed only to the God of *Israel*. So that all  
 Sacrifices were to be offered at the Temple on the Alter  
 of God, and therefore were offered only to that God,  
 whose Temple and Alter it was. And indeed this is ex-  
 22 Exod 20. pressly provided for in the Law. *He that sacrificeth to*  
*any God, but to the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed.*

And as their Sacrifices were appropriated to the Tem-  
 ple, so in some sence were their Prayers, which were  
 offered up in vertue of their Sacrifice. And therefore  
 this is a peculiar name for the Temple, that it was *the*  
*House of Prayer*. Here God was more immediately  
 present to here those Prayers which were offered to him,  
 according to *Solomons* Prayer at the Dedication of the  
 Temple. It is true, the devout *Jews* did pray to God  
 wh. re-ever they were, though at a great distance from

the

96 *Isai.* 7.  
 21 *March.* 13.  
 1. *King* 8.



the Temple, whether in the land of *Canaan*, or out of it, but then there are two things, which shew that relation their Prayers had to the Temple Worship. 1. That their stated hours of Prayer were the hours of Sacrifice, which plainly signified, that they offered up their Prayers in conjunction with those Sacrifices, which were at that time offered in the Temple; and therefore that they prayed only to that God to whom they sacrificed; for we must consider, that the constant morning and evening Sacrifices, were not particular Sacrifices, but were offered for the whole Congregation of *Israel*; and therefore every man had a share in them. Hence the time of offering the Sacrifice, is called the hour of Prayer. Thus *Peter and John went up together into the Temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour*; that is, the time of the Evening Sacrifice. Hence are such expressions as that of the Psalmist, *Let my Prayer be set before thee as Incense, and the lifting up of my hands, as the Evening Sacrifice*. Nay it is most probable, that when *Jerusalem* and the Temple were destroyed, and the people carried captive into *Babylon*, and the daily Sacrifice ceased, yet the devout people observed the hour of Sacrifice for their Prayers. Thus *Daniel* prayed three times a day, which most likely were Evening and Morning, and Noon. Where Evening and Morning no doubt signify the time of the Evening and Morning Sacrifice; and we are told, that the Angel *Gabriel* came to *Daniel* while he was praying, and touched him about the time of the Evening oblation. But 2. besides this, when they offered up their prayers to God in other parts of the Nation, or in other Countries, they prayed towards *Jerusalem*, and the Temple of God, as we now lift up our eyes to Heaven, where God dwells. Thus *Solomon* in his Prayer of Dedication, does not only beg of God to here those Prayers, which were made to him in that House, but those also which were made towards it, as

3 Acts 1.

6 Dan. 10.  
55 Psalm 17.

9 Dan. 21.

- the words must signifie in several places. In general he  
 1 Kings 8. 30. prays, *Hearken thou to the Prayer of thy servant, and of  
 thy people Israel, when they shall pray towards this place;*  
 אל-הַמִּקְדָּשׁ may signifie both in and towards this place,  
 and here includes both, as appears from the following  
 instances, which refer both to Prayers made in the  
 Temple, and to those Prayers which were made towards  
 the Temple, by persons who are at a distance. Thus  
 in what ever part of the Nation they wanted Rain, which  
 might be at a great distance from *Jerusalem*, they were  
 v. 35. to pray towards this place. The same was to be done  
 in case of Famine and Pestilence, &c. or if they were  
 besieged in any of their Cities, when they could not go  
 v. 37. to the Temple to pray. Nay, *What Prayer or supplica-  
 tion soever shall be made to any man, or by all thy people Is-*  
 v. 39. *rael, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart  
 and spread forth his hands towards this house, then bear  
 thou in Heaven thy dwelling place and forgive.* Thus  
 when they went out to battle, they were to pray to-  
 v. 44. wards the City of *Jerusalem*, and towards the Temple.  
 And when they were carried captive into their enemies  
 land, they were to pray to God toward the land which  
 God had given them, towards the Holy City, and to-  
 v. 48. wards the Temple. And accordingly it was the con-  
 stant practice of *Daniel*, when he was in *Babylon*, to pray  
 three times a day to God, with his windows open in his  
 chamber toward *Jerusalem*.

6 Dan. 10.

So that though the Temple were not the only place  
 where they might lawfully pray to God; yet all their  
 Prayers were to be directed to the Temple, and receive  
 their virtue and acceptation from their relation to the  
 Temple and the Temple-Worship. This was a standing  
 rule for the whole Jewish Nation, that whenever they  
 prayed, they offered up their Prayers in the Temple or  
 towards it; and this is generally observed by them to  
 this day: For the reason why they generally now turn  
 them-

themselves towards the East when they pray, is not out of any respect to the rising of the Sun, but because they live in Western Countries; and so by turning to the East, they look towards *Jerusalem*, and the place where the Temple stood. And this is as plain evidence, that all their Prayers as well as Sacrifices, were to be offered onely to that God who dwelt in the Temple. And therefore as they are commanded to pray to God, and this is made the peculiar attribute of God, *that he beareth prayers, and therefore unto him shall all flesh come*; so they are expressly commanded *not to make mention of the name of the Heathen gods*; that is, not to pray to them; the prayers of the Heathens consisting of a frequent repetition of the names of their gods, as we see in the priests of *Baal*, who cried from morning till evening, saying, *O Baal bear us*.

Buxtorfii Synag. Jud. p. 222.

65 Psalm. 2.  
23 Joshua 7.

1 Kings 18. 26.

Thus the Jews were commanded to bring all their Vows, first Fruits, Tythes, and offerings, to the Temple, which is a plain sign to whom they were offered.

The Seventh-day Sabbath was a sign that they worshipt that God who created the world in six dayes, and rested on the seventh, and deliver them from their Ægyptian Bondage, and gave them rest in that good Land, both which reasons are assigned by *Moses*, and therefore God commands them by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *Hallow my sabbaths, and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God*.

20 Ezek. 20.

They had but three solemn Feasts every year, and they were all in remembrance of the great Works of God, and all the Males were to go up to *Jerusalem* to keep these Feasts; and therefore all these were the Feasts of the Lord *Jehovah*.

And as they were to pray only to God, so they were only to swear by his name, which is another part of Religious Worship; and therefore to swear by the Lord of Hosts is called the Language of *Canaan*.

10 Deut. 21.  
12 Eia. 18.

So that all the parts of the Jewish Worship were appropriated to the Lord Jehovah, he was the only object of their dread and fear, and religious Adorations. And when we consider that God had chosen them to be a peculiar people to himself, that the Land was a Holy Land, Gods peculiar Inheritance, which he gave by promise to their Fathers, and the Temple was his House where he dwelt among them; it cannot be expected that any other Gods might be worshipt by such a people, in such a Land, and in such a house, as God had appropriated to himself.

3. It is very considerable, that we have no approved example under the Law, of any worship paid to Saints or Angels, or any other Being but God alone. We have too many sad examples of the Idolatry of the Jews both in worshipping the Molten Calf which *Aaron* made, and *Jeroboams* Calves, and *Baalim's*, and other Heathen gods; but had it been allowed by their Law to have paid any inferior degree of Religious Worship to Saints and Angels (which is now asserted by the Church of *Rome*, to be a matter of such great benefit and advantage to mankind) it is very strange, that we should not have one example of it throughout the Scripture, nor any authentick Records among the Jewish Writers: All the Psalms of *David* are directed to God alone, and yet we cannot think but such a devout man would have bestowed some Hymns upon his Patron and tutelar Saints, had he worshipt any such, as well as the Papists do now.

This the Church of *Rome* sees and acknowledges, and thinks she answers too, when she gives us the reason why it could not be so under the Law; because those Old Testament-Saints were not then admitted into Heaven, to the immediate vision and fruition of God; Heavengates were not opened till the Resurrection and Ascension of our Saviour, and therefore those blessed Spirits were not in a condition to be our Intercessors and Mediators,  
till

till they were received into Heaven; but now Saints and Marters ascend directly into Heaven, and reign with Christ in Glory, and it seems share with him in his peculiar Worship and Glory too.

Now 1. Whether this be so or not, the Scriptures assign no such reason for it; and therefore it is likely there might be other reasons, and I think I have made it very plain that there was. We are not enquiring for what reasons the Jewish Church did not worship Saints and Angels, but whether they did worship them or not; and it appears that they never did; so that we have neither precept nor example for this, during all the time of the Jewish Church: which is all we intend to prove by this argument.

2. But yet it is evident, that this is not a good reason why the Jews did not worship Angels under the Law. For certainly Angels were as much in Heaven then, as they are now, whatever Saints were. They are represented in the Old Testament, as the constant Attendants and Retinue of God, and the great Ministers of his Providence, and therefore they were as capable of Divine Worship in the time of the Law as they are now, nay, I think, a little more. For the Law it self was given by the Ministry of Angels, and their appearances were more frequent and familiar, and the world seemed to be more under the Government of Angels then, than it is now, since Christ is made the Head of the Church, and exalted above all principalities and powers.

And therefore sometimes the Advocates of the Church of Rome, make some little offers to prove the worship of Angels in those days: to this purpose they alledge that form of Benediction, which *Jacob* used in blessing the Sons of *Joseph*: *The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the Lads.* 44 Gen. 15.

But 1. This is not a direct prayer to the Angel, but only his committing of them to the care and patronage of



of that Angel, with a prayer to God for that purpose: And if he by experience had found that God had appointed his Angels to defend and protect him, it was but reasonable to pray to God, that the same Angel might protect his posterity.

2. But yet according to the sense of the ancient Fathers, this was no created Angel and Spirit, but the Son and Word of God, the Angel of the presence, who is so often in Scripture stiled *Jehovah*, a name which can belong to no created Spirit. And it is no hard matter to make it highly probable, that this is that Angel who redeemed *Jacob* out of all his troubles. But it is strange, if Angels were worshipt under the Old Testament, we should have no clearer and plainer evidence of it, than such a single Text, which was never expounded either by any Jewish or Christian Writers to this sense, till of late days; and here the Priests of the Church of *Rome* are to be put in mind of their Oath to expound Scripture, according to the unanimous consent of the Ancient Fathers.

### S E C T. III.

*The Testimonies of the Gospel considered ; whether Christ and his Apostles have made any alteration in the object of our Worship.*

Se<sup>ct.</sup> 3. **L** Et us now proceed in the second place, to consider the writings of the New Testament, and examine what they teach us concerning the object of our worship. And that Christ and his Apostles have made no change in the object of our worship, will appear from these considerations.

1. That they could not do it. Had they ever attempted to set up the worship of any other Beings besides



sides the One Supream God the Lord *Jehovah*, the *Jews* were expressly commanded by their Law not to believe them nor hearken to them, whatever signs and wonders and miracles they had wrought. *If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee saying, let us go after other Gods (which thou hast not known) and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of the Prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your Soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and you shall serve him, and cleave unto him. And that Prophet or dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, &c,* in which Law there are some things very material to be observed in this present dispute. 13 Deut 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

I. When they are forbidden to hearken to any Prophet, who seduces them to the worship of any other Gods, this must be extended to all these instances of Idolatrous worship, which are forbid by the Law of *Moses*, whatever is opposed to the worship of one Supream and Sovereign Being, the Lord *Jehovah*. And therefore whether these Prophets seduced them from the worship of the Lord *Jehovah*, to the worship of other Gods; or perswaded them to worship other Gods besides the Lord *Jehovah*, whether they were any of those Gods which were at that time worshipt by other Nations, or any other Gods, whom the ignorance and superstition of the people should create in after ages, whether good or bad Spirits, the case is the same; whoever perswaded them to worship any other Being with or besides the Supream God, was to be rejected by them; for this is the sense of the Mosaical Laws concerning the worship of one Supream God, as I have already proved, and the serving other Gods in this place, is opposed to the worship of

one God, and therefore must include whatever according to the Law of *Moses* is contrary to the worship of one Supreme Being.

This Law makes the worship of one God eternal and unchangeable. There is no way of altering any Divine Laws, but by a new revelation of Gods will, and there is no way to give Authority to such a revelation, but by Miracles or Prophecie; but in this case Miracles and Prophecie it self can give no authority; because God himself has expressly forbid us to hearken to any Prophet, whatever signs or wonders are wrought by him, who teacheth the worship of any other Being besides the one Supreme God. So that the Law of *Moses* having expressly forbid the worship of any other Being besides God, and as expressly forbid us to hearken to any Prophet, though a worker of Miracles, who teaches any other worship, it is impossible, that this Law should ever be altered; because we are before-hand warned by God himself, not to give credit to any Prophet, whatever he be, or whatever he do, who attempts any alteration of it. And therefore had Christ or his Apostles taught the worship of Saints and Angels, it had been a just reason for the unbelief of the *Jews*, notwithstanding all the Miracles that were wrought by them; and it is well the *Jews* never had any just occasion to make this objection against our Saviour; for if they had, I know not how it would have been answered. I say a *Just occasion*, for the *Jews* did urge this very Law against him before *Pilate*. *We have a Law, and by our Law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.* In which they refer to that discourse of our Saviour, 10 *John* 29, 30. where he affirms that God is his Father, and plainly tells them, *I and my Father are one*, for which saying they attempt to stone him for Blasphemy, and that being a man, he made himself a God, v. 33. But though he did indeed (as the *Jews* rightly inferred) make himself a God by this saying

ing, yet he did not preach any new God to them, but affirmed himself to be one with his Father, that same Supreme God, the Lord *Jehovah*, whom they were commanded to worship by their Law; he made no alteration in the object of their worship, but only did more clearly and distinctly reveal the Father to them, as manifesting himself in and by his only begotten Son. And therefore he did not offend against this Law, by seducing them to the worship of any other Gods besides the Lord *Jehovah*, which if he had done, their accusation had been just, and all the Miracles which he did, could not have secured him from the guilt and punishment of an Impostor.

Which shews us, what force there is in that argument, which the Church of *Rome* urges from those Miracles: which have been wrought at the Tombs of Martyrs, to prove the Religious invocation of them; if such Miracles were ever wrought, it was in testimony to the truth of Christianity, for which they suffered, not to betray men to a superstitious and idolatrous worship of them; ten thousand Miracles should never convince me of the lawfulness of praying to Saints departed, while I have such a plain and express Law against believing all Miracles upon any such account.

Nor can it reasonably be said, that this Law was given only to the *Jews*, and therefore obliges none but them; for we must remember, that Christ was originally sent to the *Jews*, to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*; and therefore by this Law, he was bound not to teach the worship of any other Beings, under the penalty of death; and they were bound not to own and receive him if he did; and therefore it was impossible for the true Messiah to introduce the worship of any Being besides the one Supreme God; and if Christ could not teach any such Doctrine, I know not how the worship of Saints and Angels should ever come to be a Doctrine

of Christianity. For what Christ himself cannot do, none of his Followers may, who had no other Commission but to teach those things which they had learnt from him; and he could not give commission to preach such Doctrines, as he himself had no authority to preach.

So that though this Law was not originally given to the Gentiles, but only to the Jews; yet it equally obliges the Christian Church, whether Jews or Gentiles, because Christ himself, who was the Author of our Religion was obliged by it. The worship of one Supreme God, and of none else, is as fundamental to Christianity, as it is to Judaism; for Christianity is now, or ought to be, the Religion of the Jews, as well as Gentiles; and yet the Jews are expressly forbid by this Law ever to own any Religion, which allows the worship of any Being besides God: and therefore the worship of one God and none else, must be fundamental in Christianity, if the people of the Jews are, or ever were bound to embrace the Faith of Christ.

#### S E C T. IV.

2. **A**Nd therefore I observe in the next place, that Christ and his Apostles have made no alteration at all in the object of our worship. Christ urges, that Old Testament Law in answer to the Devils Temptation; *It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve.* Which it seems, is as standing a Law after the appearance of Christ, as it was before. He gives no other direction to his Disciples, but to pray to their Heavenly Father, and in that form of prayer which he gave them, he teaches them to address their prayer neither to Saints nor Angels, but to God only. *Our Father which art in heaven.*

When St. Paul charges the Heathens with Idolatry, he does it upon this account, that they joyned the worship of

of Creatures, with the worship of the Supream God. *Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God; neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.* Where the Apostle acknowledges, that they did know God, that they did own that Supreme and Sovereign Being who made the world; and does suppose that they did worship him also. For he does not charge them with renouncing the worship of that God who made the World, but that they did *not glorifie him as God*; which only taxes the manner of their worship. And wherein that was faulty he declares in the following verses. As that they made mean and vile representations of him, they *they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four footed beasts, and creeping things.* And thus *changed the truth of God into a lie.* But this was not the only fault, but they also gave his incommunicable worship to Creatures, and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, Amen. Which words do plainly suppose, that they did worship the Creator of all things, but besides the Creator, (for so *μεν* may signifie) they worshipped the Creature also; which proves that the worship of the Supream God will not excuse those from Idolatry, who worship any thing else besides him. For the opposition lies between the Creator, and the Creature, be it a good or a bad Creature, it matters not as to Religious Worship, which must be given to neither. Or if we render the words, as our Translators do, *more than the Creator*, (for *μεν* is often used comparatively) yet so it supposes, that they did worship the Creator, and when they are said to worship the Creature *more*, that cannot signifie a higher degree of worship, but more frequent addresses; and thus the Church of Rome worships the Virgin *Mary*, more than the Creator; for they say ten prayers (if they be prayers) to the Virgin *Mary* for.

1 Rom. 21.

v. 35.



for one to God; ten *Ave Marias* for one *Pater noster*.

The same Apostle determines this matter in as plain  
 1 Cor. 8. 3, 6. words as can be: *For though there be, that are called Gods,*  
*whether in Heaven or in Earth, as there be Gods many,*  
*and Lords many; but to us there is but one God the Father,*  
*of whom are all things, and we in him, and one Lord*  
*Jesus Christ by whom are all things, and we by him* Where  
 in opposition to the Pagan Idolatry, who worshipt a  
 great many Gods, not as Supream Independent Deities  
 (for they acknowledged but one Supream God, who  
 made all the other Gods) bur either as sharers in the  
 Government of the world, or Mediators and Intercessors  
 for them with the Supream God, the Apostle plainly  
 asserts, That to us Christians there is but one God the  
 Maker of all Things, and one Lord Jesus Christ our  
 great Mediator and advocate with God the Father; that  
 is, that we must worship none else. And that none of  
 the distinctions, which are used by the Church of *Rome*  
 to justifie that Worship, which they pay to Saints and  
 Angels, can have any place here, is evident from this  
 consideration: For either these distinctions were known,  
 or they were not known, when the Apostle wrote this,  
 and in both cases his silence is an argument against them.  
 If they were known, he rejects them, and determines a-  
 gainst them; for he affirms absolutely without the *salvo*  
 of any distinctions, that we have but one God, and one  
 Mediator; that is, that we must worship no more. If they  
 were not known (as it is likely they were not, because  
 the Apostle takes no notice of them) it is a plain argu-  
 ment, that these distinctions are of no use, unless they  
 will say, that *St. Paul*, who was guided by an Infal-  
 lible Spirit, was ignorant of some very useful and material  
 notions about the object of Worship. If the Apostle  
 did not know these distinctions, it is evident they are of  
 a late date, and therefore can have no authority against  
 an Apostolical determination: If he did not know them,  
 he



he could have no regard to them, and therefore made no allowance for such exceptions.

Nay, the same Apostle does not only give us such general rules, as necessarily exclude the worship of Saints and Angels, but does expressly condemn it, and warns the Christians against it. He foretels of the Apostasie of the latter days, wherein *some shall depart from the Faith, giving heed to seducing Spirits, and the doctrine of Devils, διδασκαλίαις δαιμονίων*, the doctrine of Dæmons, the doctrine of worshipping Dæmons, or some new inferiour Deity, Saints, or Angels, or what ever they are, as Mediators and intercessors between God and men. This is the true notion of the doctrine of Dæmons amongst the Heathens, and the Apostle tells us, the time shall come, when some Christians (for it is evident he speaks here of the Apostasie of Christians) shall fall into the same Idolatry; which is an exact prophecy of what we now see done in the Church of *Rome*, who have the same notion of their Saints and Angels, and pay the same worship to them, which the Heathens formerly did to their Dæmons or inferiour Gods.

1 Tim. 4. 1.

See Mr. Joseph  
Medes Aposta-  
sie of the lat-  
ter times.

3. And as a further confirmation of this, I observe, that the Gospel of our Saviour forbids Idolatry, without giving us any new notion of Idolatry; and therefore it has made no alteration at all in this Doctrine, of the worship of one God, which *Moses* so expressly commanded the Jews to observe. For the Gospel was preach't to the Jews as well as to the Gentiles; nay, the Jews had the first and most undoubted right to it, as being the posterity of *Abraham*, to whom the promise of the Messias was made; and therefore as the Law was at first given them by *Moses*, so it did still oblige them in all such cases, wherein the Gospel did not in exprefs terms make a change and alteration of the Law; and therefore since there was no such alteration made, and yet the Law against Idolatry renewed and

con-

confirmed by the authority of the Gospel, what could the Jews understand else by Idolatry, but what was accounted Idolatry by the Law of *Moses*; that is, the worship of any other Being besides the Supream God, the Lord *Jehovah*. And since it is evident, that there are not two Gospels, one for the Jews, and another for the Gentiles, all Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, must be under the obligation of the same Law, to worship only one God.

The notion of Idolatry must alter as the object of Religious Worship does. If we must worship one God, and none besides him, then it is Idolatry to worship any other Being but the Supream God; for Idolatry consists in giving Religious Worship to such Beings, as we ought not to worship; and by the Law of *Moses* they were to worship none but God; and therefore the worship of any other Being was Idolatry. But if the object of our worship be enlarged, and the Gospel has made it lawful to worship Saints and Angels, then we must seek out some other notion of Idolatry, that it consists in worshipping wicked Spirits, or in giving Supream and Sovereign worship to inferiour Deities, which the Church of *Rome* thinks impossible in the nature of the thing, for any man to do, who knows them to be inferiour Spirits. But if Idolatry be the same under the New Testament, that it was under the Old, the object of our worship must be the same too; and we have reason to believe, that it is the same, when we are commanded to keep our selves from Idols, and to flie from Idolatry, but are no where in the New Testament expressly told, what this Idolatry is; which supposes, that we must learn what it is, from some antecedent Laws, and there were no such Laws in being but the Laws of *Moses*.

The only thing that can be said in this case, is, that the Apostle refers them not to any written Law, but to the natural notions of Idolatry: but with what

what reason this is said, will soon appear; if we consider to whom the Apostle writes; and they were both Jewish and Heathen Converts. As for the Heathens, they had corrupted all their natural notions of Idolatry, and had no sense at all of this sin till they were converted to Christianity; and therefore they were not likely to understand the true notion of Idolatry without being taught it; and it is not probable the Apostles would leave them to guess what Idolatry is. As for the Jews, God would not from the beginning trust to their natural notions, but gave them express Laws about Idolatry, which though they are the same Laws which natural reason dictates to us, as most agreeable to the nature and worship of God, yet since the experience of the world, which was over-run by Idolatrous worship, did sufficiently prove, that all men do not use their reason aright in these matters, God would not trust to the use of their reason in the weighty concernments of his own worship and glory, but gives them an express positive Law about it; and Christ and his Apostles having done nothing to repeal this Law, they leave them under the authority of it; and when they warn them against Idols and Idolatry, without giving them any new Laws about it, must in all reason be presumed to refer them to those Laws, which they already had.

## S E C T. V.

**4** **A**S a farther proof of this, I observe, that Christ and his Apostles did not abrogate, but only complete and perfect the Mosaical Laws. Our Saviour with great zeal and earnestness disowns any such intention or design. *Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil,* Mat. 17. 1  
to fill it up, by fulfilling the types and prophecies of it, by exchanging a ceremonial for a real righteousness,

teousness, or by perfecting its moral precepts with new instances and degrees of virtue. And therefore he adds, *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till all be fulfilled.* And St. Paul, who was lookt on by the believing Jews as a great enemy to the Law of Moses, does renounce all such pretences. *Do we then make void the Law through Faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the Law.*

21. Acts 21.

22.

2 Rom. 31.

8 Isai. 20.

Indeed had Christ or his Apostles attempted to have given any new Laws contrary to the Laws of Moses, it had justified the Jews in their unbelief, for God by his Prophet *Isaiab*, had given them this express rule to examine all new Doctrines by; *To the law and the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them:* and that Christ himself is not accepted from this rule, appears in this, that this is joyned with the prophesie of the Messias, both before and after; as you may see in 8 *Isai.* 13, 14. and 9 *Chap.* 6, 7. and therefore Christ and his Apostles always make their appeals to the writings of the Old Testament, and St. Paul in all his disputes with the Jews urges them with no other Authority but the Scriptures; and tho' the Miracles which were wrought by the Apostles did move the Jews to hearken to them, and greatly dispose them to believe their Doctrine, yet it was the authority of the Scriptures whereon their Faith was founded. As St. Peter tells those to whom he wrote, that though they preacht nothing to them concerning the coming of Christ, but what they were eye-witnesses of; and though God had given testimony to him by a voice from Heaven, which they heard, when they were with him in the holy Mount, yet he adds, *We have also a more sure word of prophesie, whereunto you do well: that ye take heed: as to a light, that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts.* That is the Scriptures of the Old

2 Pet. 1 16,

17, 18, 19:

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Testament; and therefore the Jews of *Berea* are greatly commended for their diligence in searching the Scriptures, and examining *St. Paul's* Doctrine by them; and this is assigned as the reason why many of them believed.

27 Acts 10,  
11.

To apply this then to our present purpose, I observe,

1. That if Christ did not make any new Laws in contradiction to the Law of *Moses*, then he could make no alteration in the object of Religious Worship. He could not introduce the worship of Saints and Angels without contradicting that Law, which commands us to worship no other Being but the one Supreme God. For the worship of Saints and Angels together with the Supreme God, is a direct contradiction to that Law, which commands us to worship God alone; though we should suppose, that in the nature of the thing, the worship of Saints and Angels were consistent with the worship of the Supreme God, yet it is not consistent with that Law, which commands us to worship none but God. So that let this be a natural or positive Law, or whatever men please to call it, it is a very plain and express Law, and Christ never did contradict any express Law of God.

It is true, that Typical and Ceremonial Worship, which God commanded the Jews to observe, is now out of date under the Gospel, and does no longer oblige Christians; but the reason of that is, because it has received its accomplishment and perfection in Christ. Christ has perfected the Jewish Sacrifices, and put an end to them, by offering a more perfect and meritorious sacrifice, even the sacrifice of himself. The Circumcision, Washings, Purifications of the Law, are perfected by the Laws of internal purity. The external Ceremonies of the Law cease, but they are perfected by an Evangelical righteousness. But this I say, that Christ never repealed any Mosaical Law, but by fulfilling and perfecting it.



He came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil. Now methinks I need not prove, that the worship of Saints and Angels is not a fulfilling, but a destroying that Law, which commands us to worship none but God. And it is not enough to say, that these are positive Laws given to the Jews, (though that be said without any reason) for let them shew me any positive Law relating to the Worship of God, which Christ has wholly abrogated without fulfilling it.

2. Yet as a farther proof, that Christ has made no alteration in the object of our Worship, that he has not introduced the Worship of Saints or Angels, or Images into the Christian Church, which was so expressly forbid by the Jewish Law, I observe that according to our Saviours own rule, *that he came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil*; these Laws of Worshipping one God, and none besides him, were not lyable to any change and alteration, because there was nothing to be perfected or fulfilled in them. He made no change or alteration but by way of perfecting and fulfilling; and therefore those Laws which had nothing to be fulfilled, must remain as they were without any change.

To perfect or fulfil a Law, must either signifie to accomplish what was prefigured by it, and thus Christ fulfilled all the Types and Prophecies of the Law, which related to his Person, or his Undertaking, as the Jewish Priesthood, and Sacrifices, &c. or to prescribe that real righteousness which was signified and represented by the outward ceremony, and so Christ fulfilled the Laws of Circumcision, Washings, Purifications, Sabbaths, &c. by commanding the Circumcision of the heart, and the purity of Mind and Spirit: or by supplying what was defective; and thus he fulfilled the moral Law by new instances of vertue, by requiring something more perfect of us, than what the letter of the Mosaical Law enjoyned. These are all the ways that I know of, and all that we

we have any instances of in Scripture of fulfilling Laws.

Now I suppose, no man will say, that the first Commandment, which forbids the worship of any other Gods besides the Lord *Jehovah*, is a Typical Law, for pray what is it a Type of : nor can any pretend that the first Commandment is a Ceremonial Law, for it prescribes no rite of worship at all, but only determines the object of worship.

As for the third way of fulfilling Laws, by perfecting them with some new instances and degrees of vertue, it can have no place here, for this Law is as perfect as it can be. For it is a Negative Law, *Thou shalt have none other God*. Now that which is forbid without any reserve or limitation, is perfectly and absolutely forbid. There are no degrees of nothing, though there are several degrees of perfection in things which have a being : and therefore though there are degrees in affirmative Laws, for some Laws may require greater attainments than other ; and one man may do better than another, and yet both do that which is good ; yet there are no degrees in not doing a thing, and no Law can do more than forbid that, which the Law-giver will not have done.

And besides, this way of fulfilling Laws, does not abrogate any command, but adds to it; it may restrain those liberties which were formerly indulged, but it does not forbid any thing which was formerly our duty to do; for when God requires greater degrees of vertue from us, he does not forbid the less. And therefore in this way, Christ might forbid more than was forbid by the Law of *Moses*, but we cannot suppose that he gave liberty to do that which the Law forbids, which is not to perfect, but to abrogate a Law.

But to put an end to this dispute; if Christ have perfected these Laws by indulging the worship of Saints and Angels under the Gospel, which was so expressly forbidden by the Law, then it seems the worship of Saints  
and

and Angels is a more perfect state of Religion, than the worship of the one Supream God alone.

If this be true, then though the Heathens might mistake in the object of their Worship, yet the manner of their worship was more perfect and excellent, than what God himself prescribed the Jews. For they worshipt a great many inferiour Deities, as well as the Supream God; and if this be the most perfect and excellent worship, it is wonderful to me, that God should forbid it in the worship of himself; that he should prescribe a more imperfect worship to his own people, than the Heathens paid to their Gods.

For to say that God forbid the worship of any Being besides himself, because this liberty had been abused by the Heathens to Idolatry, is no reason at all. For though we should suppose that the Heathens worshipt evil spirits for Gods, this had been easily prevented, had God told them what Saints and Angels they should have made their addresses to; and this had been a more likely way to cure them of Idolatry, than to have forbid the worship of all inferiour Deities; for when they had such numerous Deities of their own, to have made their application to, they would have been more easily weaned from the Gods of other Countries.

And we have reason to believe, so it would have been, had God been pleased with this way of Worship, for he would not reject any part of Religious Worship, meerly because it had been abused by Idolaters. The Heathens sacrificed to Idols, and yet he commands the Jews to offer Sacrifices to himself, and so no doubt he would have commanded the worship of Saints and Angels, had he been as well pleased with this, as he was with Sacrifices; had it been a more perfect state of Religion than to worship God only, and without any Image.

When God chose the people of *Israel*, and separated them from the rest of the world, to his own peculiar worship

worship and service, we cannot suppose that he did intend to forbid any acts of worship, which were a real honour to the Divine Nature, much less to forbid the most excellent and perfect acts of worship; for he who is so jealous of his glory, will no more part with it himself, then he will give it to another; and therefore excepting the Typical nature of that dispensation, the whole intention of the Mosaical Law was to correct those abuses, which the rest of the world was guilty of in their Religious Worship, which either respected the object of the acts of worship; that they worshipt that for God, which was not God: or that they thought to honour God by such acts, as were so far from being an honour, that they were a reproach to the Divine Nature. And whatever is forbid in the worship of God, unless there be some Mystical and Typical reasons for it, must be reduced to one of those causes. This account God himself gives, why he forbids the worship of any Being besides himself; or the worship of graven Images. *I am the Lord; that is my Name, and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven Images.* <sup>42</sup> *Isai. 48.* Whatever is his true glory, he reserves to himself, and therefore never did forbid any act of worship which was truly so; but he will not give his glory to another, and for that reason forbids the worship of graven Images, or any thing besides himself; and if this was not his glory then, much less the most perfect and excellent part of worship, I know not how it should come to be his glory now, unless the Divine Nature changes and alters too.

So that Gods having forbid by the Law of *Moses* the worship of any other Being besides himself; is a very strong presumption, that the worship of Saints and Angels, (whatever fine excuses and Apologies may be made for it, yet at least) is not a more perfect state of Religion, than to worship God alone. For though God may not always think fit to command the highest degrees of  
per-

perfection, yet there never can be any reason to forbid it. But let us now consider the nature and reason of the thing, whether it be a more perfect state of Religion to worship God alone, or to worship Saints and Angels &c. together with the Supreme God. Now the perfection of any acts of Religion must either respect God or our selves, that they signifie some greater perfections in God, or more perfect attainments in us, and a nearer union and conjunction with the Deity. Let us then briefly examine the worship of Saints and Angels, both with respect to God and our selves, and see whether we can discover any greater perfection in this way of worship, than in the worship of the Supreme Being alone, without any Rival or partner in worship; and if it appears, that it is neither for the glory of God, nor for the happiness and perfection of those, who worship, we may certainly conclude, that our Saviour has made no alteration in the object of our Worship, for he made no alteration for the worse but for the better; he fulfils and perfects Laws, which, I suppose, does not signifie making them less perfect than they were before.

## SECT. VI.

1. **T**hen let us consider, whether the worship of Saints and Angels be more for the glory of God, than to pay all Religious Worship to God alone. Now if Religious Worship be for the glory of God, then all Religious Worship is more for Gods glory than a part of it; unless men will venture to say, that a part is as great as the whole. And yet whoever worships Saints and Angels, though he be never so devout a worshipper of God also, yet he gives part of Religious Worship to Creatures, and therefore God cannot have the whole, unless they can divide their worship between God and Creatures, and yet give the whole to God.



If it be objected, that those who worship Saints and Angels, do not give that worship to them, which is peculiar and appropriate to the Supreme God, and therefore they reserve that worship which is due to God, wholly to himself, though they pay an inferiour degree of Religious Worship to Saints and Angels. I answer, what that worship is, which is peculiar to the Supreme God, I shall consider more hereafter; but for the present, supposing that they give only an inferiour degree of worship to Creatures, is this Religious Worship, or is it not? if it be, is a degree of Worship a part of Worship? if it be, then God has not the whole, and therefore is not so much honoured, as if he had the whole; as to shew this in a plain instance.

Those who pray to Saints and Angels, though they do not pray to them, as to the Supreme God, but as to Mediators and Intercessors for them with the Supreme God, yet they place an inferiour degree of hope and trust and affiance in them, or else it is non-sence to pray to them at all; so that though God may be the Supreme Object of their relyance and hope, yet he is not the only Object; he has part, and the greatest part, but not the whole, for they divide their hope and trust between God and Creatures; and if it be a greater glory to God to trust wholly in him, than to trust in him in part, then it is a greater glory to God to pray to him only, than to pray also to Saints and Angels.

Nay it is more than probable, that those who pray to Saints and Angels, as trusting in their merits and intercession for them, do not make God, but these Saints and Angels, to whom they pray, the Supreme Object of their hope. This it may be will be thought an extravagant charge against men who profess to believe, that God is the Supreme Lord of the world, and the sole giver of all good things; but this is no argument to me, but that notwithstanding this belief, they may trust more in

Saints and Angels, than in God, and consequently give the Supreme Worship to them. For men do not always trust most in those who have the greatest power, but in those by whose interest and intercession, they hope to obtain their desires of the Sovereign power. Thus I am sure it is in the Courts of earthly Princes; though men know, that the King only has power to grant what they desire, yet they place more confidence in a powerful Favourite than in their Prince, and when they have obtained their requests, pay more solemn acknowledgments to their Patron; for let the power be where it will, our hope and trust is plac'd there where our expectations are. And when mens expectations are not from the Prince, who has the power, but from the Favourite, whose interest directs the influences of this power to them, which otherwise would never have reacht them, such Favourites have more numerous dependants, more frequent addressees, more formal courtships, than the Prince himself. And when men model the heavenly Court according to the pattern of earthly Courts, and expect the conveyance of the Divine Blessings to them, as much from the intercession of Saints and Angels, as they do to obtain their desires of their Prince, by the mediation of some powerful Favourite, no wonder, if they love, and honour, and fear, reverence and adore, trust and depend on Saints and Angels, as much or more than they do on the Supreme God. For there is not a more natural notion, than to honour those for our Gods, from whose hands we receive all good things, whether we receive it from their own inherent power or not, *Deus nobis hæc otia fecit,*

*Namque erit ille mihi semper Deus, illius aram  
Sæpe tener nostris ab ovilibus imbuet agnus.*

Men may acknowledge God to be the Supreme Being, and ascribe incommunicable perfections to him, and yet may pray more frequently, more devoutly, more ardently

ly with greater trust and affiance to Saints and Angels, than to God, as it is apparent many Devotoes of the Virgin *Mary* do; and this is to give Supreme and Sovereign Worship to them, without acknowledging them to be Supreme Beings.

Indeed it is morally impossible, but our Religious Worship, trust and affiance, must be at least equally shared between the Supreme God and our Mediator, whatever he be, as men do not less trust in the interest of their Patron, than in the power of their Prince; for it is not meer power but favour, which is the immediate object of our trust: and therefore God appointed his only begotten Son to be our Mediator, as for other great and wise reasons, so to prevent Idolatry by giving us a God incarnate, who is a proper object of Religious adoration, to be our Mediator, that seeing men will worship their Mediator, they may have a God for their Mediator to worship. The sum is this: If it be more for the glory of God to have all Religious Worship appropriated to himself, than to have only a part of it, and it may be the least share and part too, then the worship of Saints and Angels cannot be for Gods glory.

But besides this, the worship of Saints and Angels, together with God, does mightily obscure and lessen the Divine perfections, and therefore it cannot be for his glory. It represents him indeed like a great Temporal Monarch, but it does not represent him like a God.

That which we ignorantly think a piece of State and greatness in earthly Monarchs, to administer the great affairs of their Kingdoms, to receive Petitions and Addresses, to bestow Favours, to administer Justice by other hands, to have some great Ministers and Favourites to interpose between them and their Subjects, is nothing else, but want of power to do otherwise. He would be a much greater Prince, more beloved and revered, who could do all this himself; but no Prince can be

present in all parts of his Kingdom, nor know every particular Subject, much less their particular cases, and conditions, deserts and merits; and therefore is forc't to divide this care into many hands, and in so doing shares his power and honour with his Subjects. But whoever imagines any such thing of God, denies his omnipresence, his omnipotence, his omniscience, and his particular care and providence over his Creatures. God indeed does not always govern the world by an immediate power, but makes use both of the Ministry of Angels and Men; but he governs all things by his immediate direction, or at least by his immediate inspection. He overlooks every thing himself, while all Creatures either obey his commands, or submit to his power. If this be the true notion of Gods governing the world, that he has the concerns of the whole Creation under his eye, and keeps the disposal of all things in his own hands, so that nothing can be done, but either by his order or permission; then the most perfect and glorious Angels, the greatest Ministers of the Divine Providence, can challenge no share in Religious Worship, cannot be the objects of our trust or hope, because they are only Ministers of the Divine Will, can do nothing from themselves, as civil Ministers of State, and Officers of great trust can in Temporal Kingdoms but are always under the eye, and always move at the command of God. In such a state of things, all the peculiar rights of Sovereign Power and Dominion God reserves wholly to himself, as any wise Prince would, among which the receiving the Prayers and Petitions of his Creatures is none of the least; to hear Prayers is made the peculiar attribute of God in Scripture, *Thou art a God that bearest prayers, therefore unto thee shall all flesh come.* And reason tells us, that it is the most eminent part of Sovereignty and Majesty; and the reason why Temporal Princes do not reserve this wholly to themselves, is because they cannot do it, but

but God can, and he challenges it to himself, and will not allow any Creature to do it; and there is no temptation to pray to any Creature, when we know, that they cannot help us, that they must receive their orders and commands from God, and not act by their own will and inclinations.

Thus Princes have their Favourites, to whom they express a very partial fondness and respect, to whom they will deny nothing that they ask, nor hardly shew any grace or favour to their Subjects without them; and this forces Subjects to address themselves to their Prince by them; but it is a reproach to the Divine Goodness and universal Providence, to conceive any such thing of God; which yet is the foundation of the worship of Patron Saints and Angels, as persons so dear to God, that he cannot deny their requests, and will not grant our Petitions without them, or at least, that it is the most certain and effectual way to obtain what we desire, to offer up our Prayers and Petitions to God by their hands.

No doubt but all good men on earth, much more Blessed Saints and Angels in heaven, as being more perfect and excellent Creatures, are very dear to God; but yet God is not fond and partial in his kindness, as earthly Princes are, but has an equal regard to all his Creatures, and delights in doing good to them, and needs not to be importuned by any Powerful Favorites to hear their cries and prayers; he will as soon attend to the Prayers of an humble penitent sinner, as of the most glorious Saint, and is more ready to grant than they are to ask.

A Mediator of Redemption is very consistent with all the perfections of the Divine Nature, and does mightily recommend both the goodness and wisdom of God to the world. When Mankind had transgressed the Laws of their Creation, they forfeited their natural right and interest in the care and goodness of their Maker;

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The Divine Justice, and the wisdom of God in the government of the world, required an atonement and expiation for sin; and it was an amazing demonstration of the Divine goodness to sinners, that he found one himself, that he gave his Son to be a propitiation for our sins. When men by sin had forfeited their original innocence and happiness together, they could expect nothing from God, but by way of Covenant and Promise; and every Covenant between contending parties, must be transacted in the hands of a Mediator, and none so fit to be our Mediator, as he who is our ransom too.

And a Mediator must be invested with power and authority to see the terms of this Covenant performed, and this is his Mediatory Intercession. He intercedes not merely as a powerful Favourite, but as the Author and Surety of the Covenant, not merely by intreaties and prayers, but in virtue of his Blood, which sealed the Covenant, and made atonement and expiation for sin.

Thus Christ is our Mediator of redemption, who hath redeemed us by his Blood; and we must offer up all our Prayers to God in his name and powerful intercession, because we can expect no blessings from God, but by virtue of that Covenant, which he purchaseth and sealed with his Blood.

But now a Mediator of pure intercession, without regard to any atonement made for sin, or any Covenant of redemption (such as Saints and Angels and the blessed Virgin are made by the Church of *Rome*) is a mighty reproach to the Divine Nature and perfections. It cloaths God with the passions and infirmities of earthly Princes; represents him as extremely fond of some of his Creatures, and very regardless of others; as if his kindness to some Favourite Saint, were a more powerful motive to him to do good, than his own love to goodness; as if he knew not when, nor to whom, to shew mercy with-

without their direction or counsel, or would not do it without their importunity; as if some of his Creatures had as much the ascendant over him, as some favourites have over their Princes, who can with a words speaking have any thing of them, and extort favours from them, even against their wills and inclinations. No man can think there is any need of such Intercessors and Mediators with God, who believes him to be infinitely wise, and to be infinitely good; to know when it is fit to hear and to answer, and to be always ready to do, what his own wisdom judges fit to be done. There can be no place for such intercessions and intreaties, to an infinitely perfect Being; for they always suppose some great weakness or defect in him who wants them, for even a wife and a good man wants no Mediators to persuade him to do that good, which is fit to be done. The objection against this is very obvious, and the Answer, I think, is as easie. The objection is this, If God be so good, that he needs not such Prayers and Intercessions to move him to do good, Why do we pray for our selves? Why do we pray for one another? Why do we desire the Prayers of good men here on earth? Why is it a greater reproach to the Divine Perfections to beg the Prayers of *St. Paul*, or *St. Peter*, now they are in Heaven, than to have begged their Prayers, while they had been on Earth?

To this I answer: When we pray for our selves, I suppose, we do not pray as Mediators, but as Suppliants, and nothing can be more reasonable, than that those, who want mercy, or any other blessing should ask for it. It is certainly no reproach to the Divine goodness, that God makes Prayer the condition of our receiving, which is a very easie condition, and very necessary to maintain a constant sense and reverence of God, and a constant dependance on him. And when we pray for one another on earth, we are as meer suppliants

cants, as when we pray for our selves, and to pray as supplicants is a very different thing from praying as Advocates, as Mediators, as Patrons. The vertue of the first consists only in the power and efficacy of Prayer; the second in the favour and interest of the person. This the Church of *Rome* her self owns, when she allows no Mediators and Advocates, but Saints in Heaven, which is a sign, she makes a vast difference between the prayers of Saints on earth, and Saints in Heaven.

There are great and wise reasons, why God should command and encourage our mutual prayers for each other while we are on earth; for this is the noblest exercise of universal love and charity, which is a necessary qualification to render our prayers acceptable to God; this preserves the unity of the body of Christ, which requires a sympathy and fellow-feeling of each others sufferings, this is the foundation of publick worship when we meet together to pray with, and for each other to our common Father; and it gives a great reputation to vertue and Religion in this world, when God hears the prayers of good men for the wicked, and removes or diverts those judgment which they were afraid of; this becomes the wisdom of God, and is no blemish to his goodness, to dispence his mercies and favours in such a manner as may best serve the great ends of Religion in this world.

God does not command us to pray for our selves or others, because he wants our importunities and solicitations to do good, but because it serves the publick ends of Religion and Government, and is that natural homage and worship, which Creatures owe to their great Creator and Benefactor, and Sovereign Lord. But to imagine, that God needs Advocates and Mediators to solicit our cause for us in the Court of Heaven, where none of these ends can be served by it, this is a plain impeachment of his wisdom and goodness, as if he wanted

great importunities to do good, and were more moved by a partial kindness and respect to some powerful favourites, than by the care of his Creatures, or his love to goodness.

From hence it evidently appears, how inconsequent that reasoning is, from our begging the prayers of good men on earth, to prove the lawfulness of our praying to the Saints in Heaven to pray and interceed for us; the first makes them our fellow supplicants, the second makes them our Mediators and Intercessors; and how little the Church of *Rome* gains by that distinction, between a Mediator of Redemption, and Mediators of pure intercession; for though they pray to Saints and Angels only as Mediators of Intercession, yet this is a real reproach to the nature and government of God; a Mediator of Redemption is very consistent with the Divine glory and perfections, a Mediator of pure intercession is not. And the sum of all is this, That it is so far from advancing the Divine glory to worship Saints and Angels together with God, that it is a real reproach and dishonour to him; and therefore this can be no Law nor Institution of our Saviour, who came not to abrogate the Divine Laws, but to fulfil and perfect them. Some think there is no danger of dishonouring God by that honour they give to Saints and Angels, because they honour them as Gods Friends and Favourites, as those whom God has honoured and advanced to great glory; and therefore whatever honour they do to them, rebounds back again on God, and this may be true, while we give no honour to Saints and Angels, but what is consistent with the Divine glory; but when the very nature of that honour and worship we pay to them, is a diminution of Gods glory, and a reproach to his infinite perfections, as I have made it appear, the worship of Saints and Angels is, surely it cannot be for Gods glory to advance his Creatures by lessening himself.

## SECT. VII.

2. **L**et us now consider, whether the worship of Saints and Angels together with God, be a more perfect state of Religion than the Worship of God alone, with respect to our selves; whether it puts us into a more perfect and excellent state. It does indeed mightily gratifie the superstition of mankind to have a multitude of Advocates and Mediators to address to, but there are three considerations which may satisfy any man, how far this is from a perfect state of Religion.

1. That it argues very mean and low conceits of God, for did men believe God to be so wise, so good, and so powerful, as really he is, they would be contented with one infinite God, instead of ten thousand meaner Advocates. The worship of Saints and Angels, as I have already proved, is a great reproach to the Divine perfections, and therefore such worshippers must have very imperfect and childish apprehensions of the Supream Being, which is a plain proof what an imperfect state of Religion this is; for the perfection of Religion is always proportioned to that knowledge we have of God, who is the object of it.

2. This worship of Saints and Angels is a very servile state, it subjects us to our fellow-creatures, who are by nature but our equals, however are not our Gods. It is a state of liberty, freedom, and honour, to be subject to God, who is our natural Lord and Sovereign, but to fall down to our fellow Creatures, and to worship them with Divine honours, with all humility of address, and sacred and awful regards, is to debase our selves as much below the dignity of our natures, as we advance them above it. The excellency and perfection of reasonable Creatures principally consists in their Religion, and that is the most perfect Religion, which does most advance,  
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adorn, and perfect our Natures; but it is an argument of an abject mind, to be contented to worship the most excellent Creatures, which is a greater dishonour than to own the vilest Slave for our Prince. Mean objects of worship do more debase the Soul, than any other the vilest Submissions; and the more our dependancies are, and the meaner they are, the more imperfect our State and Religion is.

3. The greatest perfection of Religion, consists in the nearest and most immediate approach to God; which I think, these men cannot pretend to, who flye to the patronage and intercession of Saints and Angels, to obtain their Petitions of him. Though we should allow it lawful to pray to Saints and Angels, to mediate for us with God, yet we cannot but own it a more perfect state to do as the Saints and Angels themselves do, go to God without any other Advocate but Christ himself. It is a great happiness to have a friend at Court, to commend us to our Prince, when we have no interest of our own, but it is a greater priviledge to go immediately to our Prince when we please, without any Favourite to introduce us. This is the perfect state of the Gospel, that we have received *The adoption of sons, and because we are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into our hearts crying Abba Father.* That is, this Holy Spirit which dwells in us, teaches us to call God Father, and to pray to him with the humble assurance and confidence of Children. This is the effect of Christ intercession for us, *That we may now come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find grace to help in a time of need.* The throne of Grace certainly is not the Shrine of any Saints, but the immediate throne and presence of God, whether we may immediately direct our Prayers through the merits and intercession of Christ. Upon the same account the whole body of Christians are called a *Spiritual house*, that is, the Temple

4 Gal. 5. 6.

4 Heb. 16.

of God, where he is peculiarly present to hear those Prayers which are made to him, *An holy priest-hood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. And a chosen generation, a royal priest-hood, an holy nation, a peculiar people*: This is a privilege above what the Jews enjoyed, they had a Priest-hood to minister in holy things, and to offer their Sacrifices for them, but the whole Nation was not a Priest-hood, nor had such immediate access to God; but now every Christian has as near an access to God as the Priests themselves under the Law had; can offer up his Prayers and Spiritual Sacrifices immediately to God; and that very acceptably too, through Jesus Christ our great High Priest and Mediator; as if our Prayers be acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, we need no other Mediators or Advocates. This is the onely direction our Saviour gave his Disciples a little before his death, to ask in his name, with this promise, *If ye ask any thing in my name, I will do it. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.* And to give them the greater assurance of acceptance, he acquaints them with Gods great and tender affection for them, such as a Father has for his Children. *At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you because ye have loved me, and have believed, that I came out from God;* a reason which equally extends to all those who shall believe in Christ, to the end of the world. And can we now imagine, that when our Saviour has purchast for us this liberty of access to God, he should send us round about by the shrines and Alters of numerous and unknown Saints to the Throne of Grace. When he will not assert the necessity of his own Prayers for us, while we pray in his name, because our heavenly Father hath such a tender affection for all the Disciples of Christ, can we think it necessary to pray to St. Paul and St. Peter, and

1 Pet. 2. 5. 9.

14 Joh. 13, 15.  
16 Joh. 24.

26, 27.

and the Virgin *Mary* to pray for us. This is none of our Saviours institution, nor can it be, because Christ by his death and sufferings and intercessions brings us nearer to God, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* speaks, *Having* <sup>10 Heb. 19,</sup> <sup>20, 21, 22.</sup> *therefore Brethren boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having an high Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith.* But the worship of Saints and Angels removes us at a great distance from God, as not daring to approach his presence without the mediation of some Favourite Saint. And though the Church of *Rome* does sometimes pray directly to God onely, in the Name and Mediation of Christ, as the Pagans themselves sometimes did to their Supream Deity, yet it seems this is what they dare not trust to, and therefore joyn the Meditation of Saints with their Prayers to God, and never pray to God without it.

## SECT. VIII.

5. **T**Hat the Gospel of our Saviour has made no alteration in the object of our worship, appears from that Analogie which there is, and ought to be, between the Jewish and Christian Worship. The Jewish and Christian Church are but one Church, and their worship the same worship, onely with this difference, that the Jewish worship was in Type and Figure, and Ceremony, the Christian worship in Truth and Substance. And therefore if this Legal and Evangelical worship be the same, it must have the same object; for the object is the most essential part of worship.

So that if it appear, not onely from the express letter of the Law of *Moses*, but from all the Types and Figures of the Law, that God onely was to be worshiped by the Jewish

Jewish Church ; if Christ was to fulfil all these Types and Figures in his own person, and in the Evangelical worship, then it is certain, that the object of our worship must be the same still ; for if the Type was confined in its nature and signification to the Worship of One God, then the whole Christian Worship, which was signified and præfigured by these Types, must be peculiar and appropriate to the same One Supreme God.

As for instance. I have already proved at large, that the Jews were to worship but One God, because they had but one Temple to worship in, and all their worship had some relation or other to this one Temple, and therefore all their worship was appropriated to that One God, whose Temple it was ; now we know Gods dwelling in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, was only a Type and Figure of Gods dwelling in Humane Nature, upon which account Christ calls his body the Temple ; and St. *John* tells us, *That the word was made flesh and dwelt among us*, ἐν ἡμῖν ἐσκήνωσεν tabernacled among us ; as God formerly dwelt in the Jewish Tabernacle or Temple, and St. *Paul* adds, *That the fulness of the God-head dwelt in Christ bodily*, συμπληρώσας really, substantially, as an accomplishment of Gods dwelling by Types and Figures, and shadows in the Jewish Temple.

2 Joh. 19. 21.

1 Joh. 14.

2 Coloss. 3.

Now if all the Jewish worship was confined to the Temple, or had a necessary relation to it, as I have already proved, and this Temple was but a figure of the Incarnation of Christ, who should dwell among us in humane nature, then all the Christian worship must be offered up to God through Jesus Christ, as all the Jewish worship was offered to God at the Temple ; for Christ is the only Temple (in a strict and proper sense) of the Christian Church, and therefore he alone can render all our services acceptable to God. So that God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the only object of our worship, and Christ considered as God Incarnate,

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carnate, as God dwelling in humane nature, is the only Temple where all our worship must be offered to God, that is, we shall find acceptance with God onely in his name and mediation: we must worship no other Being but onely the Supream God, and that onely through Jesus Christ.

Thus under the Law the Priests were to intercede for the people, but not without Sacrifice; their Intercession was founded in making atonement and expiation for sin; which plainly signified, that under the Gospel we can have no other Mediator, but onely him, who expiates our sins, and intercedes in the merits of his Sacrifice; who is our Priest and our Sacrifice, and therefore our Mediator; as St. John observes, *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.* The Law knew no such thing as a Mediator of pure intercession, a Mediator, who is no Priest, and offers no Sacrifice for us, and therefore the Gospel allows of no such Mediators neither, who mediate onely by their Prayers, without a Sacrifice, such Mediators as the Church of Rome makes of Saints and Angels and the Virgin Mary; but we have onely one Mediator, a Mediator of Redemption, who has purchased us with his Blood, of whom the Priests under the Law were Types and Figures. 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2;

Thus under the Law, none but the High Priest was to enter into the Holy of Holies, with the blood of the Sacrifice; now the Holy of Holies was a Type of Heaven, and therefore this plainly signified, that under the Gospel, there should be but one High Priest and Mediator, to offer up our Prayers and Supplications in Heaven, He and He onely, who enters into Heaven with his own Blood, as the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies with the blood of the Sacrifice. There may be a great many Priests and Advocates on Earth to intercede for us, as there were under the Law, great num- 1 Heb. 12.



numbers of Priests, the sons of *Aaron*, to attend the Service and Ministry of the Temple, but we have, and can have, but one Priest and Mediator in Heaven.

Whoever acknowledges that the Priest-hood and Ministry of the Law was Typical of the Evangelical Priest-hood and Worship, cannot avoid the force of this Argument, and whoever will not acknowledge this, must reject most of *St. Paul's* Epistles, especially the Epistle to the Hebrews, which proceeds wholly upon this way of reasoning: Now this manifestly justifies the worship of the Church of *England*, as true Christian worship, for we worship One God through one Mediator, who offered himself a Sacrifice for us, when he was on Earth, and interceeds for us as our High Priest in Heaven, which answers to the One Temple, and the One High Priest under the Law: But though the Church of *Rome* does what we do, worship the Supream God through Jesus Christ, yet she spoils the Analogie between the Type and the Antitipe, the Legal and Evangelical worship, by doing more; when she sends us to the Shrines and Altars of so many several Saints, surely this cannot answer to that one Temple at *Jerusalem*, where God alone was to be worshipped, there are as many Temples and Mercy-seats now, as there are Shrines and Altars of Saints and Angels, by whose Intercession we may obtain our requests of God. When she advances Saints and Angels to the Office of Mediators and Intercessors in Heaven, this contradicts the Type of One High Priest, who alone might enter into the Holy of Holies, which was a Type of Heaven; for there is some difference between having one Mediator in Heaven, (and there can be no more under the Gospel to answer to the Typical High Priest under the Law) and having a hundred Mediators in Heaven together with our Typical High Priest. To have a Mediator of pure Intercession in Heaven, who never offered any Sacrifice for us, cannot answer to the High

High Priest under the Law, who could not enter into the Holy of Holies without the blood of the Sacrifice, The High Priests entring but once a year into the Holy of Holies, which was Typical of Christs entring once into Heaven to intercede for us, cannot be reconciled with a new succession of Mediators, as often as the Pope of *Rome* pleases to cannonize them. So that either the Law was not Typical of the state of the Gospel, or the Worship of Saints and Angels, which is so contrary to all the Types and Figures of the Law, cannot be true Christian Worship.

Sixthly, I shall add but one thing more, that Christ and his Apostles have made no alteration in the object of Worship, appears from hence, that *de facto* there is no such Law in the Gospel for the Worship of any other Being besides the One Supream God. There is a great deal against it, as I have already shewn; but if there had been nothing against it, it had been argument enough against any such alteration, that there is no expreis positive Law for it. The force of which argument does not consist meerly in the silence of the Gospel, that there is nothing said for it, (which the most Learned Advocates of the Church of *Rome* readily grant, and give their reasons, such as they are, why this was not done, why we are not directed to pray to Saints and Angels, and Images, &c.) but the argument lies in this, that there can be no alteration made in the object of worship without an expreis Law; and therefore there is no alteration made, because there is no such Law in the Gospel.

The Jews were expressly commanded to worship no other Being; but the Lord *Jehovah*, as I have already proved, which Law appropriates all the acts of Religious Worship to one God; and therefore all those, who were under the obligation of this Law (as to be sure all natural Jews were) could not without the guilt of Idolatry give any

28 Mat. 20.

Religious Worship to any other Being, till this Law were expressly repealed, and express leave given to Worship some other Divine Beings besides the Supreme God; so that at least our Saviour himself, while he was on Earth, and Subject to the Law, and his Apostles, and all believing Jews, were obliged by this Law, to Worship none but God, unless we can shew where Christ by his Legislative Authority, or his Apostles by Commission from him, have expressly repealed this Law; nay, indeed, unless we can shew, that Christ himself repealed this Law, and taught the Worship of Saints and Angels, the Apostles themselves could have no Authority to do it, for their Commission was onely to teach what Christ had commanded them, which though it does not extend to matters of Order and Discipline, and the external Circumstances of Worship, yet it does to all the Essentials of Faith and Worship, and I think the right object of Worship is the most Essential thing in Religious Worship.

From hence it appears, that at least all the Jewish Christians in the Apostles days, and all succeeding Ages to this day, cannot Worship Saints and Angels without Idolatry, because the Law, which was given to them, and never yet repealed, commands them to Worship none but God; and if Gentle Converts were received into the Jewish Christian Church (and Christ has but one Church of Jews and Gentiles) they must also be obliged by all those Laws, which were then, and are still Obligatory to all believing Jews, and therefore Gentiles as well as Jewish Christians are still bound to Worship none but God.

Now I think I need not prove, that an express Law can be repealed onely by an express Law, That Law which commands us to Worship God, and him onely, must continue in full force, till God do as expressly declare, that he allows us to pay some degree of Religious Worship to other Beings besides himself: When a Law-giver has declared his will and pleasure by a Law, it is  
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not fit that Subjects should be allowed to guess at his mind, and dispute a way and express Law by some surmizes and consequences, how probable soever they may appear; for at this rate a Law signifies nothing, if we may guess at the will of our Law-giver, without and against an express Law. And yet none of the Advocates of the Church of *Rome* (though they are not usually guilty of too much modesty) ever had the confidence to pretend an express Law for the worship of Saints and Angels, and Images, &c. and though they sometimes alledge Scripture to prove this by, yet they do not pretend that they are direct proofs, but only attempt to prove some other Doctrines from Scripture, from which they think they may prove by some probable consequences, that which the Scripture no-where plainly teaches, nay the contrary to which is expressly taught in Scripture. And if this may be allow'd, I know no Law of God so plain and express, but a witty man may find ways to escape the obligation of it. This is a consideration of great moment; and therefore I shall discourse more particularly of it.

The Law of *Moses* expressly commands us to Worship God, and him onely; Our Saviour Christ owns and confirms the Authority of this Law in the Gospel; the Church of *Rome* notwithstanding this Law, gives Religious Worship to Creatures; the question then is, how she avoids the force of this Law, since it is no where expressly repealed, and she does not pretend that it is. Now the Patrons of Creature-worship think to justify themselves from the breach of this Law, these three ways. 1. By consequences drawn, as they pretend, from other Scripture Doctrines. 2. By Distinctions. And 3. By Authority. Let us then examine, whether all this have any force against an express Law, which was never expressly repealed.

1. By consequences drawn, as they pretend, from o-  
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ther Scripture-Doctrines; and I shall discourse this with a particular reference to the Invocation of Saints. For when they would prove the lawfulness of praying to Saints, they alledge no direct proof of this from Scripture; but because they must make a shew of saying something from Scripture, when they are to deal with such Hereticks as will be satisfied with no less authority, they endeavour to prove something else from Scripture, from whence they think by an easie consequence, they can prove the lawfulness of praying to Saints.

Thus they very easily prove, that we may and ought to pray for one another, and to desire each others prayers while we are on Earth; and from hence they presently conclude, that we may as lawfully pray to Saints in Heaven to pray for us, as beg and desire their prayers, while they are on Earth.

And to confirm this, they endeavour to prove, that some extraordinary Saints, whose merits are very great, do directly ascend up into Heaven into the immediate presence of God, and a participation of his Glory; and hence they conclude, that they have authority and power to help us and to intercede for us, and that they are so far advanced above us in this mortal state, that they deserve some kind of Religious Honour and Worship from us, as being *Dii per participationem*, Gods by participation, that is, by partaking in the Divine Nature and Glory by their advancement to Heaven.

And if after all this they can prove, that the Saints in Heaven do pray and intercede for us on Earth, they

\* Bonum atque utile esse suppliciter Sanctos invocare, & ab beneficiis impetranda a Deo per filium ejus Jesum Christum Domini nostrum, qui solus noster Redemptor & Salvator est, ad eorum orationes opem auxiliumque confugere. *Conc. Trin. 16. 25. de Invocatione.*

think the demonstration is complete and perfect, that therefore \* *It is good and profitable* (as the Council of Trent words it) *humbly to invoke the Saints after the manner of Supplicants, and to fly to their prayers and help and aid to obtain blessings of God by his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who*



*our onely* (not Intercessor and Advocate, but) *Redeemer and Saviour.*

Now how they prove all this, is not my business at present to enquire; but my inquiry is, whether such arguments as these be sufficient to oppose against the authority of an express Law; and if they be, truly I think it a very vain thing, either for God or men to make any Laws. For,

1. I desire to know, what these Gentlemen would prove by such kind of arguments as these. Suppose we should grant them, that the Saints are received into Heaven before the resurrection, and are actually possessors of all that Glory and Happiness, which they say they are; suppose we should grant them, that by some means unknown to us, Saints and Angels are acquainted with all that we do and suffer in this World, hear all our vocal or mental prayers, which we offer to God or to themselves, and that they do actually pray and intercede for us, what follows from hence? That therefore we may pray to Saints? not I hope if there be an express Law against it. These arguments at most can onely prove, that in the nature of the thing it might be fitting and reasonable to pray to Saints, if God thought fit to allow it, not that we must pray to Saints, though God has forbid it. For those are powerful reasons indeed, which can justify Saint-worship against the express Law and declared Will of God. Could they first prove one of these three things: Either 1. that there is no such Law against the worship of any other Being besides God. Or 2. that this is not the sense of this Law, that they must not pray to Saints or Angels, that the Law, which forbids us to worship any Being but God, does not forbid the Worship of Saints. Or 3. that though there was such a Law, and this were the sense of it, and this Law, were never formally repealed by God, yet it disappears

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of it self, and obliges no longer since the discovery of such reasons as these for the Worship of Saints and Angels. I say, could they prove any thing of this in the first place, then there would be as much reason for the Worship of Saints, as there is strength and validity in their Arguments ; but no Reason can take place against an expresse Law, till it be as expressly repealed. For,

2. If an expresse Law may be disobeyed, as often as men fancy they see reason to do, what the Law forbids, this overthrows the whole Authority of making Laws, and makes every Subject a Judge, whether the Laws of a Sovereign Prince shall be obeyed or not. At this rate he has the greatest Authority, who has the best reason ; and since every man believes his own reason to be best, every man is the Sovereign Lord of his own Actions. It is to be presumed, that no Prince makes a Law, but what he apprehends some reason for, and to oppose any mans private reason against a Law, is to set up a private mans reasons against the publick reason of government : and yet it is much worse to oppose our reason against a Divine Law, which is to oppose the reason of Creatures against the reason of God, unless we will say, that God makes Laws without reason, and those who can believe that, may as easily imagine, that God will expect, that those Laws which he makes without reason, should be obeyed without reason also, and then to be sure all their reasons cannot repeal a Law, nor justify them in the breach of it. It becomes every Creature to believe the Will of God to be the highest reason, and therefore when God has declared his Will by an expresse Law, while this Law continues in force, (as it must do, till it be as expressly repealed) it is an impudent thing to urge our reasons against the obligations of it. So that since God has expressly forbid us to Worship any being besides himself, unless we can prove, that God has repealed this Law, it will never justify the Worship of Saints and  
Angels,

Angels, though we could by the plainest and easiest arguments prove to the conviction of all Mankind, that Saints and Angels are very fit Objects of our Religious Worship, and that it is no diminution to the glory of God, to pay some degree of Religious worship to them.

3. Especially, when the matter of the Law is such, that whatsoever reasons may be pretended on one side or the other, it must still be acknowledged to be wholly at the will and pleasure of the Law-giver, which side he will choose. As for instance, suppose there were no natural and necessary reason against the Worship of Saints and Angels, yet there is no natural and necessary reason for it neither, and therefore God may either allow or forbid it, as he himself pleases, without assigning any reason why he does either. And when it appears that God might forbid it if he pleases, and that he has actually forbid it by an express Law, it is time to leave off reasoning about it: natural reason can give us no assurance of any thing, which it cannot prove to be necessary, whatever in the nature and reason of things may be, or may not be, can never be proved either to be, or not to be, by meer reason; for it is a contradiction to say, that there is no necessary reason why such a thing should be and yet that I can prove by reason, that it must be, which supposes, that there is a necessary reason, why it should be; for I cannot prove, that it must be, unless I can prove, that it must necessarily be; that is, that there is a necessary reason, why it should be.

To apply this then to our present Case. The Law expressly forbids us to Worship any other Being besides the Supream God, the Church of *Rome* prays to Saints and Angels and Images, which is an essential part of Divine Worship; and without ever attempting to prove this Law to be repealed, she justifies her Worship by such reasons and consequences, as I have now cited from their most celebrated Doctors, and some of which are the principles,

ciples, whereon the Council of *Trent* founds their praying to Saints and Angels. I ask then, whether these arguments, whereby they endeavour to justify the worship of Saints and Angels, prove that we must worship them, that such worship is their natural right, and our duty. No, this the Church of *Rome* will not own; the most the Council of *Trent* says, is that it is *bonum & utile*, good and profitable to do it; but, say I, if they do not prove it to be necessary, they prove nothing; for if Saints and Angels have not a natural right to our worship, though we should suppose them to be very fit objects of some degrees of worship, yet it is at Gods choice, whether he will allow it or not, and they can challenge no worship, and we must give none, if God forbids it; and therefore since God has forbid the worship of any Being, but, himself (and therefore of the most excellent Saints and Angels) by an express Law; and it no-where appears, where or when, or in what manner this Law was repealed, a hundred such arguments as these cannot prove it lawful to worship Saints and Angels against an express Law not to do it. Though we should grant that God, if he pleased, might allow us to worship Saints and Angels, as the Church of *Rome* does without any deminution of his own Glory, which is the most that all their arguments can pretend to prove, yet it does not hence follow, that we may worship them, when God by an express Law has declared, that he will not allow it. No arguments nor consequences can prove, that God allows us to do that, which by an express Law he has forbid us to do. No reason can prove that to be Gods will, which he has publickly declared in his Law to be against his will.

4. That no reason or arguments can absolve us from our obedience to an express Law, till it be as expressly repealed, appears from this, that our obligation to obedience does not depend merely upon the reason of the Law,

Law, but upon the Authority of the Law-giver, and therefore though the reason of the Law should cease, yet while it is enforced by the same Authority, it obliges still. Thus I am sure, it is in humane Laws, and it is very fitting it should be so; meer reason cannot make a Law, for then every thing which is reasonable, would be a necessary duty; that which is reasonable may be fit matter for a Law, but it is the Authority of the Law-giver which makes the Law, and the same Authority which at first made it a Law, continues it to be a Law while the Authority lasts, though the particular reason for which it was enacted into a Law, may cease.

So that though the Church of *Rome* could prove, that there is no reason now against the Worship of Saints and Angels, that all those reasons for which God forbade the Jews to Worship any one but himself, were now ceased; yet till the Law be repealed too, it is utterly unlawful to Worship any Being besides the Supreme God, and yet this is the most that all their reasonings come to, that there is not the same reason for this Law under the State of the Gospel, that there was under the Jewish Oeconomy.

They suppose, that God forbade the Jews to Worship any one but himself, because they were in great danger of falling into Pagan Idolatries, and Worshipping the Gods of the *Egyptians*, and other Neighbour-Nations, and that this was the case also of the Christian Church at the first planting of the Gospel; but now there is no danger of Worshipping false Gods, we may very securely Worship the Friends and Favourites of God.

They suppose, that all the ancient Patriarchs who lived before the Resurrection of Christ, were not received into Heaven, and therefore not being in a State of Bliss and Glory themselves, were not yet capable of Divine Honours, could neither know our Prayers, nor intercede for us. But now at last some eminent Saints and Mar-



tyrs ascend directly into Heaven, and are the *beati*, advanced to such a state of Happiness and Glory, that they are fit objects of Religious Worship, and are so powerful in the Court of Heaven, that God denies them nothing which they ask; and so tender and compassionate to us, that they readily undertake our Cause, and intercede for us, and therefore it is very good and profitable now to invoke their aid and assistance by solemn and devout Prayers.

Now though the learnedst men among them are put to miserable shifts to prove the least part of all this, yet let us for Argument-sake, suppose all this to be true, that things are mightily changed since the making of this Law, and that there is not the same reason now to confine all Religious Worship to God alone, that there was in the time of *Moses*, what follows from hence, that therefore we may now Worship Saints and Angels, notwithstanding this Law which forbids it? By no means, unless they can prove that the Law is repealed too, as well as the reason ceased: Here is the Authority of the Law-giver still though we should suppose, that we had lost the reason of the Law; till the Law is as expressly repealed as it was given, it is Gods Will still, and that is reason enough to bind the Law upon us, though other reasons fail. The reason (if we speak of such reasons as these, which the Church of *Rome* assigns, for it is a different case, if we speak of eternal and necessary reason, which is nothing else but the eternal & immutable nature and Will of God, which is an eternal Law) did not make the Law, and the change of the reason cannot repeal it: And since we see, that God has not repealed this Law, we rather ought to conclude, that we are mistaken in the reasons, for which God made this Law, or that there are other reasons, which we know not of, for which he continues it: we may indeed reasonably suppose, that God will repeal a Law, when the reason, for which it

was given, ceases, though Earthly Princes may not always do so ; but still the Law binds till it be repealed ; and it is more reasonable to conclude, that the reason of the Law continues, while we see God does not repeal it, than first to perswade our selves, that the reason of the Law is changed, and thence infer the repeal and abrogation of the Law, when we see no such thing done.

5. That these Arguments which the Roman Doctors urge, to justify their Worship of Saints and Angels, are of no force to repeal that Law, which forbids the Worship of any other Being besides the Supreme God, appears from this, that they had no force in them to prevent the making of this Law, and therefore much less can they repeal it now it is made : The reasons which they use, had the same force then, which they have now, and if notwithstanding all these reasons, God thought fit to forbid the Worship of all Created Beings, it is ridiculous to imagine, that these reasons should supersede the Obligation of that Law, which is made in contradiction to all such reasonings : as to shew this briefly.

They prove, that we may pray to Saints and Angels to pray for us, because we may desire good men on earth to pray for us. Now suppose we could not assign the difference between praying to Saints in Heaven, and desiring the Prayers of Saints on Earth, yet I would desire to know, whether good men did not pray for one another, and desire each others prayers, before and after God gave this Law on Mount *Sinai*, which forbids the Religious Worship and Invocation of any other Being but himself : if good men did in all ages pray for one another, and desire one anothers prayers, and God allowed and approved of this, then it seems God did not think this a good reason for praying to Saints and Angels in Heaven, because good men might beg each others prayers on earth, for if he had, he would not have made that Law, which forbids such a Religious Invocation of any

Creature. And if notwithstanding this reason, which had as much force then, as it has now, God made and promulged this Law, this reason can never repeal it, nor dissolve the obligation of it.

Thus if the Saints and Angels being in Heaven be a good reason why they should be Worshipped, this was as good a reason at the giving of the Law, as it is now ; for though we should suppose with the Church of *Rome*, that Saints departed, were not in Heaven then, yet certainly the Angels were, and if their Being in Heaven made them fit Objects of our Worship, why did God so expressly forbid it ; and if he forbid it then, when there was as much reason to allow the Worship of those heavenly Inhabitants, as there is now, this argument cannot prove, but that God forbids it still.

The same may be said of the Intercession of Saints and Angels. The Papists suppose, that the Saints and Angels pray and intercede for us in Heaven, and obtain for, and convey many blessings to us, and therefore it is good and profitable to pray to them, and to flie to their patronage ; now though indeed they date the Intercession of Saints, (as they do their admission into Heaven) from the Resurrection of our Saviour, yet there is as much evidence for the aids and intercessions of Angels, before and under the Law, as there is now ; nay, I think somewhat more ; for the government of the world was much more under the Administration of Angels, in the time of the Law, then it is now ; and yet notwithstanding this, God did by an express Law forbid the Worship of any Being but himself, and therefore of these Angelical powers, who are somewhat superiour to Saints in Heaven ; and if this were no good reason against making this Law, it can be no good reason to prove the abrogation of it.

2. The next way they take to evade the Obligation of this Law of Worshipping God onely, is by distinctions. As to name the chief of them. They

They tell us, that this Law is onely opposed to the Worship of false Gods, such Gods as the Heathens Worshipped, not to the Worship of Saints and Angels, who are the Friends and Favorites of God.

And then they distinguish about the nature of Worship; they confess there is a Worship which is peculiar to God, Supream and Sovereign Worship, which is peculiar to the Supream Being, and this, for what reason I know not, they call *Latria*; but then there is an inferiour degree of Worship, which they call *Dulia*, which may be given to excellent Creatures, to Saints and Angels, who Reign with Christ in Heaven.

They farther distinguish between absolute and relative Worship. Absolute Worship is, when we Worship a Being for its self, and thus God onely is to be Worshipped; but Relative Worship is, when we Worship one Being out of respect to another, and thus we may Worship Saints and Angels upon account of their Relation to God.

Now I shall have occasion to examine these distinctions more particularly hereafter, my business at present is to examine, how far these distinctions can justify the Worship of Saints and Angels against an expresse Law, which commands us to Worship God onely. And I have three things to say on this Argument. 1. That the letter of the Law will admit of no such distinctions as these. 2. That the Scripture no where allows of any such distinctions. And 3. That no distinctions can justify our acting against the letter of a Law, which have not the same authority which the Law has.

1. The Letter of the Law will admit of no such distinctions as these. The Law is, *Thou shalt have none other Gods before me.* The explication of this Law is, *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave and swear by his name.* Or as our Saviour expounds it, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serve.* 20 Exod.  
10 Deut. 20.  
4 Mat. 10.

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Now these words do plainly exclude the Worship of all other Beings besides the Supream God : They exclude indeed the Worship of all the Heathen Gods, which were at that time Worshipped in the World, but they are not confined to the Worship of the Heathen Gods, nor meerly to the Worship of those Gods who were at that time Worshipt, but should any new Gods start up in after Ages, whether among Jews or Christians, the words extend to all that are, and all that ever shall be Worshipped. *Thou shalt have none other Gods before Me*, Signifies, that we must Worship no other Being but the Supream God, for *to have a God*, is to give Religious Worship to some Being; as appears from that exposition, which both *Moses* and our Saviour Christ gives of it. *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serve*. For it is impossible to have any God besides the Supream God, in any other sense than as we Worship some other Being, besides the Supream God, with Divine honours; and whatever Being we so Worship, become our God, and therefore this Law forbids the Worship of any Being, which is not God, be it Saint or Angel, or the Virgin *Mary*; how excellent and perfect Creatures soever they be, they are not our God, and therefore must not be Worshipped. If we must Worship and serve God *onely*, as our Saviour expressly tells us, that we must Worship no Creature whatever it be, the Worship of Saints and Angels is as expressly forbid by this Law, as the Worship of the Heathen Gods, for that Law which commands us to Worship God *onely*, excludes the Worship of all Creatures, whatever they be.

But may not the meaning of this Law be onely this: That we must not give Supream and Sovereign Worship to any other Being, but the Supream God, but we may give an inferiour degree of Worship to some excellent Spirits, who under God have the care of us. And  
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is not this plainly signified in the very Letter of the Law, when it says, *Thou shalt have none other Gods before me.* For no other Worship makes any Being a God, but that which is Supream and Sovereign, peculiar and appropriate to the One Supream God; and therefore not to have any other Being for our God, is not to give Supream and Sovereign Worship to it. Now what that Worship is, which is peculiar and appropriate to the Supream God, I shall discourse particularly in the second part; our present inquiry is, whether this Law makes any such distinction. The Law says, *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serve:* Here is no distinction between Supream and Subordinate Worship, whatever is an Act of Worship must be given to God onely. But the Law says, *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me,* and therefore it must signifie Supream & Sovereign Worship, for no other degree of Worship makes a God. Did the Heathens then Worship no inferiour Gods? did those who Worshipped so many several Gods, look upon them all as Supream and absolute? or were they so senseless, as to give Supream and Sovereign Worship to inferiour Deities? or does not this Law forbid the Worship of those Gods, whom the Heathens Worshipped as Inferiour Dæmons, but onely the Worship of those Gods, whom they accounted Supream and Sovereign? If this Law forbids the Worship of all Heathen Gods, and it is certain, that they Worshipped a great many Gods, whom they did not account Supream, then there can be no place for this distinction here, for such an Inferiour Worship as makes an Inferiour God, is as well forbid, as Supream and Sovereign Worship.

The Law says, *Thou shalt have none other Gods before me:* or besides me; which as I observed before, does not exclude the Worship of the Supream God, but forbids the Worship of any other Being together with him. The meaning is not, Thou shalt not renounce my

my Worship, for the Worship of any other Gods, but thou shalt Worship me, and no other God besides me : now I would onely ask this question, Whether a Jew who Worshipped the God of *Israel*, who declared himself to be the Supream God, could give Supream Worship to any other God? This is contrary to the sense of all mankind, to Worship him as Supream, whom they do not believe to be Supream. And therefore when God forbad them to joyn the Worship of any other Gods with the Worship of himself, he must forbid all kinds and degrees of Worship, even the most inferiour Worship, which the Heathens paid to their inferiour Deities.

If you say, that God did indeed forbid all kinds and degrees of Worship to be paid to the Heathen Gods, which were impure and wicked Spirits, but still it is lawful to pay an inferiour Worship to Saints and Angels, who are the Friends of God. I answer, the Law makes no distinction between the Worship of good and bad Spirits, and therefore as far as this Law is concerned, we must either deny this inferiour Worship to all, or grant it to all. If this Law does not forbid giving inferiour degrees of Worship to other Beings, then it does not forbid the inferiour Worship of Heathen Gods ; that may be faulty upon other accounts, but is no breach of this Law, and then the Heathens were not guilty of Idolatry in Worshipping their inferiour Dæmons with an inferiour Worship. If this Law does forbid even this inferiour degree of Worship, then it forbids the Worship of good Spirits too, though with an inferiour Worship, which transforms true Saints and Angels into false and fictitious Deities.

But I have another argument to prove, that this Law can have no respect to the different degrees of Worship. The *Roman* Doctors themselves grant, that the difference between Supream and Subordinate or Inferiour

riour Worship does not consist in the outward Act, that all or most of the external Acts of Worship may belong to both kinds, they except indeed Sacrifice, but contrary to the sense of all men; for the Heathens offered Sacrifice to their Inferiour Deities, as well as to the Supream; and there is no imaginable reason to be assigned, why Sacrifice, as well as Prayers, may not be an Act of Inferiour, as well as of Supream Worship. The difference then between Supream and Inferiour Worship, is onely in the Intention and Devotion of the Worshippers, and no man can by the external Act, know whether this be Supream or Inferiour Worship. Now from hence I thus argue: if the Worship forbidden by this Law be such, as can be known by the external Act, then this Law can have no regard to the degrees of Worship, for the degrees of Worship are not in the external Acts, but in the mind of the Worshipper, which cannot be known by external Acts. Now that the Law did forbid the external Acts of Worship, without any regard to the Intention of the Worshipper, appears in this, that this Idolatrous Worship was to be punished with Death, and therefore it must be such external Idolatry as falls under the cognizance of humane Judicatures. Had there been any regard to the degrees of Worship, no man could have been convicted of Idolatry by the external Act, and could not have been liable to punishment, unless he had confessed his intention of giving Supream Worship to a false God, and so this Law of putting such Idolaters to death had signified nothing, because it had been impossible for them to convict any man of Idolatry, but by his own confession; but when the external Act which is visible to all men, is sufficient to convict any man of Idolatry, it is next to a demonstration, that the Law had no respect to the degrees, but to the Acts of Worship.

And that our Saviour in that Law, *Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serve*,

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13 Deut. 7. 7.

- had no regard to the different degrees of Worship, I have already proved at large, for allowing that distinction, he had not given a good answer to the Devils temptation.

Thus as for their distinction between absolute and relative Worship, that though we must not Worship any Creature, the most excellent Saints and Angels, for themselves, yet we may Worship them upon account of that relation they have to God; that is, we may Worship them for Gods sake, though not for their own; I find no intimation of any such distinction in the Law. We are there commanded to have no other Gods, to Worship God and him only, which excludes Saints & Angels from being the object of our worship, as well as devils.

2. But possibly it may be said, that though the Law takes no notice of such distinctions, yet the Scripture in the explication of this Law may make allowances for it. Now in answer to this, I onely desire to know, where the Scripture has made any such distinction between Worshipping good and evil Spirits, the Enemies and Rivals, or the Friends of God, between Supream and Subordinate, absolute or relative Worship; I can find no such distinctions in Scripture, & I have a material reason to believe no such can be found, *viz.* because there was no occasion for them. The Scripture no-where allows us to give any kind of Worship to any Creature, and therefore there was no need to distinguish between the kinds and degrees of Worship.

6 Deut. 13. 14.  
13 Deut. 7.

The most material thing that can be said in this cause is this: that when the Scripture mentions this Law of Worshipping One God, it opposes it to the Worship of the false Gods of the Heathens; from whence some may conclude, that God forbid the Worship onely of these false Gods. But we must consider, that the Law is conceived in such general terms, as to exclude the Worship of all Beings besides the Supream God; but it could not be thought, that God should at that time immediate-

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ly apply this Law against the Worship of any other Beings, but those which were at that time Worshipped in the World. If God gives a Law, which forbids the Worship of all Beings besides himself; and particularly applies this Law to prohibite the Worship of all those Gods which were then Worshipped in the World, will any one in their wits hence conclude, that if the folly and superstition of men should set up a new race and generation of Gods in after Ages, that the Worship of these new Gods is not as well forbidden by this general Law, as the Worship of those Gods which were Worshipt at that time when this Law was given? if this were true, possibly Pagan *Rome* it self was not guilty of Idolatry; for most, if not all of their Gods might be of a later date than the giving the Law.

3. Now since no such distinctions as these appear in Scripture, it is impossible they should justify the Worship of Saints and Angels, which is so expressly forbidden by the Law, if we will acknowledge them to be distinct Beings from the Supream God; for if they are not the Supream God, we must not Worship them, for we must Worship none but God. No distinctions can justify us in this case, but such as God himself makes; for otherwise it were easie to distinguish away any Law of God. Humane Laws will admit of no distinctions, but such as they make themselves; for a distinction does either confine and strengthen, or enlarge the Law, and he who has power to distinguish upon a Law, has so far power to make it. If the Law says, that we shall Worship no other Being besides God, and we have power, if we have but wit enough to invent some new distinctions, between the Worship of good and bad Spirits, between Supream and Subordinate, absolute and relative Worship, this makes a new Law of it; for it is one thing to say, thou shalt Worship God onely, and quite contrary to say, thou shalt Worship God onely and good Spirits, God with a Supream and absolute, good Spirits with a sub-



ordinate and Relative Worship. This I think is sufficient to shew, that we must admit of no distinctions upon a Divine Law, but what the Scripture it self owns, and therefore since those distinctions, with which the Church of *Rome* justifies her Worship of Saints and Angels, are no where to be found in Scripture, they have no Authority against an expresse Law.

3. The next course the Papists take to justify their Creature-worship, in contradiction to that Law, which expressly commands us to Worship none but God, is an appeal to such Authorities, as they think sufficient to decide this matter.

Now I shall not say much to this, for I believe all Mankind will acknowledge, that no Authority less than Divine, can repeal a Divine Law; and therefore unless God himself, or such Persons as Act by a Divine Authority, have repealed this Law, no other Authority can do it. That Christ and his Apostles have not repealed this Law, I have already proved, that the whole Church in after Ages had any Authority to repeal this Law, I desire them to prove.

For the Authority of the Church, as to the Essentials of Faith and Worship, is not the Authority of Law-givers, but of Witnesses. The Church never pretended in former Ages to make or to repeal any Divine Laws, but to declare and testify what the belief and practice of the Primitive and Apostolick Churches was; and it is unreasonable to think, that they should have any such Authority; for then Christ and his Apostles Preached the Gospel to little purpose, if it were in the Power of the Church to make a new Gospel of it when they pleased.

But indeed could it appear, that the Apostles did teach the Christians of that Age, and the Church in those Ages, which immediately succeeded the Apostles, did practice the Worship of Saints and Angels, we should have reason to suspect, that we, and not they, are mistaken

in the sense of that Law, which commands us to Worship none but God.

But then none can be admitted as competent Witnesses of this matter, but those who did immediately succeed the Apostles, or conversed with Apostolical Men and Churches. And thanks be to God, there is no appearance of Creature Worship in those Ages, we dare appeal to the Testimony of Fathers and Councils for above three hundred years; and those who come after, come a little too late to be Witnesses of what was done in the Apostolick Churches; especially, when all the intermediate Ages knew nothing of it.

I shall not fill up this discourse with particular Citations, which learned men know where to find; since the Roman Doctors can find nothing in the Writings of the first Fathers to justify the Worship of Saints and Angels, and the Protestant Writers find a great deal in those Ages against it.

Indeed at the latter end of the fourth Centry, some of the Fathers used some Rhetorical Apostrophes to the Saints and Martyrs in their Orations, which the Church of *Rome* interprets to be Prayers to them; but though other Learned men have vindicated those passages so far, as to shew the vast difference between them, and solemn and formal Invocations, which is not my business at this time, yet there are several things very well worth our observation towards the true stating of this matter. As,

1. That these Fathers came too late to be Witnesses of the Apostolical practice, which they could know no otherwise, than we might know it, if there had been any such thing, *viz.* by the Testimony and practice of the Church, from the Apostles till that time: This was nowhere pretended by them, that the Invocation of Saints had been the practice of the Catholick Church in all Ages, and they could have no proof of this, unless they had better Records of former times, than we have at this

*See Bishops  
Ulsters Answer  
to the Jesuits  
Challenges.*

this day, and such as contradicted all the Records which we now have of the Apostolick and Primitive Churches, and I believe few men will be so hardy, as to assert this; and methinks there should be as few, who are so credulous as to believe it, and I am sure, there is no man living who is able to prove it.

2. Nay, the particular sayings of these Fathers, by which the Romanists prove the Invocation of Saints, do not prove, that it was the Judgment and Practice of the Church of that Age. They no where say, that it was, and it does not appear to be so by any other Records. Let them shew me any Council before, or in those times, when these Fathers lived, that is in the Fourth Century, which decreed the Worship of Saints and Angels. Let them produce any publick offices of Religion in those days, which allows this Worship; and if no such thing appears, those men must be very well prepared to believe this, who will without any other Evidence judge of the Practice of the Church, onely from some extravagant flights of Poets & Orators: and if even in those days, the Worship of Saints was not received into the publick offices of the Church, methinks we may as well live without it still, and they must either grant, that these Fathers, whose Authority they alledge, meant no such thing by these Rhetorical flourishes, as they extract out of them, or else that they introduced a new & unknown Worship into the Christian Church; and then let them prove, that some few Fathers of the fourth Century, without the publick Authority of the Church, had Authority enough of their own to change the Object of Worship, contrary as the Church in former Ages believed, to an expresse Divine Law, which commands us to Worship none but God.

3. Nay, I further observe, that these Fathers, whose Authority is urged for the Invocation of Saints by the Church of *Rome*, do no-where dogmatically and positively assert the lawfulness of Praying to Saints and

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Angels, and many Fathers of the same Age do positively deny the lawfulness of it, which is a plain argument, that it was not the Judgment and Practice of the Church of that Age, and a good reasonable presumption, that these Fathers never intended any such thing in what they said, how liable soever their words may be to be expounded to such a sense.

Gregory Nazianzen, indeed in his Book against Julian the Apostate, speaks to the Soul of Constantius, in this manner: *Hear O thou Soul of great Constantius (if thou hast any sense of these things,)* &c. But will you call this a Prayer to Constantius? does this Father any where assert in plain terms that it is lawful to pray to Saints departed? a hundred such sayings as these, which are no Prayers to Saints, cannot prove the lawfulness of praying to Saints against the constant Doctrine of the Fathers of that Age. Thus in his Funeral Oration for his Sister Gorgonia, he bespeaks her to this purpose, that if she knew what he was now a doing, and if holy Souls did receive this favour from God to know such matters as these, that then she would kindly accept that Oration which he made in her praise, instead of other Funeral Obsequies. Is this a Prayer to Gorgonia to intercede for him with God? by no means! He only desires if she heard what he said of her (which he was not sure she did) that she would take it kindly. Whereas in that very Age the Fathers asserted, that we must pray only to God; and therefore they define Prayer by its relation to God; *That Prayer is a request of some good things, made by devout Souls to God, that it is a conference with God, that it is a request offered with supplication to God.* Which is a very imperfect definition of Prayer, were it lawful to pray to any other Being besides God.

St. Augustin tells us, that when the names of the Martyrs were rehearsed in their publick Liturgies, it was not to invoke them, or pray to them, but only for an

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Greg. Naz.  
Orat. 2. in  
Gorg.

Basil, Orat. in  
Julie. Martyr.  
Greg. Naz. O-  
rat. 1. de Ora-  
tione.

Chrys. in Ge-  
nts. Homil. 30.  
Aug. De Civit.  
Dii, l. 22. cap.  
10.

honourable remembrance; nay, he expressly tells us, that the Worship of dead men, must be no part of our Religion, for if they were Pious men, they do not desire this kind of honour, but would have us Worship God.

Ad. de vera religioni, cap. 55.

*Honorandi ergo sunt propter imitationem, non adorandi propter religionem,* they are to be honoured for our imitation, not to be adored as an Act of Religion.

The Council of *Laodicea* condemned the Worship of Angels; and so does *Theodoret*, *Origen*, and others of that Age. It is notoriously known, that the *Arrians* were condemned as guilty of Idolatry for Worshipping Christ, whom they would not own to be the true God, though they owned him to be far exalted above all Saints and Angels, and to be as like to God, as it is possible for any Creature to be: & those who upon these Principles, condemned the Worship of the most perfect and excellent Creature, could never allow the Worship of Saints and Angels.

So that though the Worship of Saints and Angels, did begin about this time to creep into the Church, yet it was opposed by these Pious and Learned Fathers, and condemned in the first and smallest appearances of it; which shows, that this was no Catholick Doctrine and Practice in that Age, much less that it had been so from the Apostles; and I think, after this time there was no Authority in the Church to alter the Object of Worship, nor to justify such an Innovation as the Worship of Saints and Angels, in opposition to the express Law of God.

The sum of this Argument is this: Since there is an express Law against the Worship of any other Being besides the Supreme God, the Lord *Jehovah*, which never was expressly repealed, whatever plausible reasons may be urged for the Worship of Saints and Angels, they cannot justify us in Acting contrary to an express Law of God.

FINIS



